



صِفَةُ الصَّلَاةِ

THE
Prophet's Prayer
DESCRIBED

Shaykh, al-ʿAllāmah Muḥammad b. Ṣāliḥ al-ʿUthaymīn
One Of The Greatest Scholars Of Islamic Jurisprudence Of This Era



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Transliteration Table

Consonants

ء	'	د	d	ض	ḍ	ك	k
ب	b	ذ	dh	ط	ṭ	ل	l
ت	t	ر	r	ظ	ẓ	م	m
ث	th	ز	z	ع	'	ن	n
ج	j	س	s	غ	gh	ه	h
ح	ḥ	ش	sh	ف	f	و	w
خ	kh	ص	ṣ	ق	q	ي	y

Vowels

Short	ـَ	a	ـِ	i	ـُ	u
Long	ـَـ	ā	ـِـ	ī	ـُـ	ū

Diphthongs	ـَوَ	aw	ـَيَ	ay
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عَزَّوَجَلَّ

The Mighty and Majestic.

سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى

The Sublime and Exalted.

صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

May Allāh make good mention of His Prophet in the highest company and grant him safety in this life and the next.

رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ

May Allāh be pleased with him.

رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ

May Allāh show mercy to him.

عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام

Peace be upon him.

Introduction to the Book

All praise is due to Allāh, who obligated upon His servants the (various) obligations, without any need or want from them, and He gave those who perform them the most complete of reward and best of recompense, and He punished those who shun away from them and are negligent with regards to them with that which they deserve from the (appropriate) punishment.

And I bear witness there is no deity worthy of worship in truth except Allāh alone without any partners, without any doubt or hesitance, and I bear witness that Muḥammad (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) is His servant and Messenger, the one sent as a mercy to the servants. Allāh completed His blessing upon the believers with him, and rectified the state of the world and religion with him. So the prayers and salutations of Allāh be upon him, his family and his companions and those who follow them upon righteousness to the Day of Reckoning.

To proceed, indeed Allāh has chosen for us a religion, and He is not pleased with any religion besides it. He has chosen for us the religion of Islam and has bestowed it upon this Ummah [nation]. Allāh said:

﴿الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ

دِينًا

“This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islām as your religion.” (Al-Mā'idah: 3)

And He said about it also:

﴿وَمَنْ يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ

الْخَاسِرِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾﴾

“And whoever seeks a religion other than Islām, it will never be accepted of him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers”. (Āl 'Imrān: 85).

So I remind you of the blessing of Allāh upon you with this religion of Islam. How many people – and there are so many of them – have become misguided away from the religion of Islam and have not been guided to it. So they are lost in this world of theirs and the Hereafter, just as Allāh said:

﴿قُلْ هَلْ نُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِالْأَخْسَرِينَ أَعْمَالًا ﴿١٠٣﴾ الَّذِينَ ضَلَّ سَعِيَهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ يَحْسَبُونَ

أَنَّهُمْ يُحْسِنُونَ صُنْعًا ﴿١٠٤﴾ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ وَلِقَائِهِ فَحَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ

فَلَا تُقِيمُ لَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ وَزَنًا ﴿١٠٥﴾﴾

“Say (O Muḥammad ﷺ): ‘Shall We tell you the greatest losers in respect of (their) deeds? Those whose efforts have been wasted in this life while they thought that they were acquiring good by their deeds!’ They are

those who deny the Āyāt (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) of their Lord and the Meeting with Him (in the Hereafter). So their works are in vain, and on the Day of Resurrection, We shall assign no weight for them.” (Al-Kahf: 103-105)

And Allāh said:

﴿قُلْ إِنَّ الْخَاسِرِينَ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَأَهْلِيَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ أَلَا ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْخُسْرَانُ

الْمُبِينُ

“Say (O Muḥammad ﷺ): ‘The losers are those who will lose themselves and their families on the Day of Resurrection. Verily, that will be a manifest loss!’” (Al-Zumar: 15).

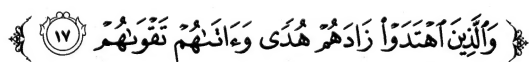
And that (i.e. Islam) is to submit to Allāh and to yield to Him outwardly and inwardly in creed (‘Aqīdah), and in statements and actions. So Islam is not creed (‘Aqīdah) alone, rather, Islam is creed and statements and actions. So just like Islam cannot be only actions alone, similarly it cannot be only creed alone. The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Islam is built upon five pillars; the testification that there is no deity worthy of worship in truth except Allāh and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh, the establishment of the Prayer, the giving of Zakat, Hajj, and the fasting of Ramaḍān”¹. The meaning of that is that

¹ Bukhārī (8).

these foundations are the pillars of Islam which it cannot be upright without, just like a structure cannot stand without its foundations.

Indeed, we, O brothers, remind ourselves and you of the blessing of Allāh upon us with regards to this religion of Islam, and we ask Allāh the Most High to keep us steadfast upon it until we meet Him (i.e. till death). However, be aware O brothers, the blessing of Islam is like any other blessing; if gratitude is shown for it, then it increases and becomes established and consolidated. If, however, it is shown ungratefulness, it decreases or disappears, and we ask Allāh for safety.

Hence, if we are upright with that which is upon us in the religion of Islam, in terms of preserving it, calling to it and remaining firm upon it, then we will increase in steadfastness upon it, and in our actions and calling to it, just as our Lord the Mighty and Majestic said:



“While as for those who accept guidance, He increases their guidance, and bestows on them their piety.”
(Muḥammad: 17).

And with this it becomes clear that the more a person increases in his worship to Allāh, Allāh opens up to him doors of knowledge and *Īmān* (faith) that He does not open up to

others. So I encourage the students of knowledge especially, to cling onto the outward and inward signposts of Islam (distinguishing apparent signs of Islam) that are connected to the right of Allāh the Mighty and Majestic, and those that are connected to the rights of His servants, in order that Allāh increases them (students particularly and servants of Allāh generally) in knowledge, guidance and light.

Therefore, learn the boundaries of what Allāh revealed upon His Messenger so that you may worship your Lord upon insight and evidence; for indeed they are not equal, the ones who know, and the ones who do not. The one who worships Allāh knowing how to worship Him, and he knows he worships upon the legislation of Allāh and His Messenger, this one is not equal to the one who worships Allāh and is ignorant (rather, the ignorant one is lower in level).

And when you do come to know the boundaries of Allāh (legislations, *ḥalāl* & *ḥarām*) then fear Allāh the Most High in clinging onto them to the best of your ability, and implement them as you have come to know (correctly). Do not be overcome by the blame of those who blame, or the criticism of those who criticize.

﴿أَتَخْشَوْنَهُمْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ أَحَقُّ أَنْ تَخْشَوْهُ إِن كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ﴾ (١٣)

“Do you fear them? Allāh has more right that you should fear Him, if you are believers.” (Al-Tawbah: 13)

It is not hidden from any of us that the religion of Islam is built upon five: the testification that there is no deity worthy of worship in truth except Allāh and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh, establishment of the prayer, giving of zakat, the fasting of Ramaḍān, and the Hajj to the Sacred House of Allāh. These five pillars fluctuate in their levels, virtues and rulings, although they concur in the fact that they are all pillars of Islam.

As for that which is related to the Prayer, then this treatise regarding the Prayer – may Allāh make it a means of benefit in knowledge and actions, and make myself and you guides to the truth and guided upon it – I chose this topic for two affairs:

Firstly: The legislative importance of it, since the prayer is the greatest pillar of Islam after the two testifications.

Secondly: Many Muslims today have become careless and lax in many affairs related to the prayer.

This treatise includes the presentation of the following matters:

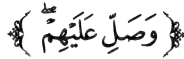
1. Meaning of the prayer linguistically and Islamically.
2. When and where was the prayer made an obligation.
3. Clarification of its importance legislatively.
4. Clarification of its virtues and benefits.
5. Warning from neglecting it.
6. Clarification of the ruling regarding the one who abandons it.
7. Clarification of some of its conditions.

8. Clarification of its description in light of the Qur'ān and Sunnah.
9. Clarification of the obligation in relation to it.
10. Clarification of two noble principles.
11. Clarification of the importance of *Khushū'* in it (focus & submissiveness), and that which relates to it.
12. Clarification of the ruling of congregational prayer and some of its (other) rulings.

Chapter 1

The Meaning of Prayer Linguistically and Legislatively

'Ṣalāh' linguistically means du'ā (supplication, calling), as in the statement of Allāh:



“And invoke Allāh for them.” (Al-Tawbah: 103)

In other words, supplicate for them, and the statement of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم): “If one of you is called (invited) then accept, and if he is fasting, then supplicate for him; and if he is not fasting then eat”¹.

Al-A'shā (a poet) said:

“My daughter says as I'm on the verge of travelling, O my Lord, distance hardships and difficulties from my father (on the journey). Upon you is the like of that which you prayed for me so close your eyes in sleep. For indeed the side of a person is a resting place”²

In other words, for you is the same supplication (du'ā) as you made for me.

¹ Muslim (1431).

² *Dīwān of al-A'shā* p. 73.

‘*Ṣalāh*’ legislatively is worship with specific statements and actions, opened up by the *Takbīr* (‘*Allāhu Akbar*’) and closed by the *Taslīm*¹ (‘*Assalāmu ‘Alaykum Wa Raḥmatullāh*’).

So that includes the five prayers, and the *Jum‘ah* (Friday prayer), and the *Janāzah* prayer (prayer upon the deceased), and the prostration of recitation and gratitude² – if we say they are within the description of opening up with *Takbīr* and closing with *Taslīm*.

However, it does not include circumambulation (*Ṭawāf*) of the Ka‘bah, because that is not opened with the *Takbīr*, and is not concluded with *Taslīm*.

As for the hadith; “*Ṭawāf* around the House (Ka‘bah) is prayer,”³ then it is not established from the Prophet (ﷺ) as Shaikh al-Islām Ibn Taymīyah (رحمته الله) mentioned. He said, “The scholars are agreed that the affairs which are obligated for the prayer in terms of the opening *Takbīr*, concluding *Taslīm* and recitation and other than that, are not obligatory for the *Ṭawāf*; similarly, the affairs that nullify the prayer such as eating, drinking and speaking and other than that, do not nullify the *Ṭawāf*.”⁴

¹ Often referred to as the ‘final Salām’ in many sections of this book.

² Prostration of *Shukr* [thankfulness] and prostration of *Tilāwah* [recitation].

³ Tirmidhī (960).

⁴ *Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā* (26/125).

Chapter 2

When and Where Was the Prayer Obligated?

The five prayers were obligated before the *Hijrah*¹ on the night of ascension (*al-Isrā' Wa al-Mi'rāj*), i.e. on the night the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) was taken to *Bayt al-Maqdis* (al-Masjid al-Aqsa)², and then he was taken up to the heavens. That was prior to the *Hijrah* by one year, and it has been said three years before, and it has also been said five years before.

Allāh obligated it upon His Prophet (ﷺ) as 50 prayers in every night and day, so he accepted and descended submitting to this command, and being pleased with the obligation of Allāh for him. He (ﷺ) is the leader of this Ummah [nation], so his adherence to that dictates the adherence of the whole Ummah [nation] to it.

As the Prophet (ﷺ) descended back down to Earth, he came across Mūsā b. 'Imrān³ (عليه السلام) who was in the sixth heaven. "Then the Prophet descended till he met Moses, and then Moses stopped him and asked, 'O Muḥammad! What did your Lord enjoin upon you?' The Prophet replied, 'He enjoined upon me to perform fifty prayers in a day and a night.' Mūsā said, 'Your followers cannot do that; go back so that your Lord may reduce it for you and for them.' So the

¹ The emigration of the Muslims from Makkah to Madinah.

² In Jerusalem.

³ Referred to as 'Moses' by some.

Prophet turned to Jibrīl (Gabriel) as if he wanted to consult him about that issue. Jibrīl (Gabriel) told him of his opinion, saying, 'Yes, if you wish.' So Jibrīl ascended with him to the Irresistible and said while he was in his place, 'O Lord, please lighten our burden as my followers cannot do that.' So Allāh deducted for him ten prayers whereupon he returned to Moses who stopped him again, and kept on sending him back to his Lord till the enjoined prayers were reduced to only five prayers. Then Moses stopped him when the prayers had been reduced to five and said, 'O Muḥammad! By Allāh, I tried to persuade my nation, *Banī Isrā'īl* (children of Isrā'īl) to do less than this, but they could not do it and gave it up. However, your followers are weaker in body, heart, sight and hearing, so return to your Lord so that He may lighten your burden.' The Prophet turned towards Jibrīl for advice and Jibrīl did not disapprove of that. So he ascended with him for the fifth time. The Prophet said, 'O Lord, my followers are weak in their bodies, hearts, hearing and constitution, so lighten our burden.' On that the Irresistible said, 'O Muḥammad!' The Prophet replied, '*Labbayk and Sa'dayk*' (I am here in Your service, to fulfill the obedience). Allāh said, 'The Word that comes from Me does not change, so it will be as I enjoined on you in the Mother of the Book.' Allāh added, 'Every good deed will be rewarded as ten times, so it is fifty (prayers) in the Mother of the Book (in reward) but you are to perform only five (in practice).' The Prophet returned to Moses who asked, 'What have you done?' He said, 'He has lightened our burden,

He has given us for every good deed a tenfold reward.' Moses said, 'By Allāh! I tried to make *Banī Isrā'īl* observe less than that, but they gave it up. So go back to your Lord that He may lighten your burden further.' Allāh's Messenger said, 'O Moses! By Allāh, I feel shy from returning too many times to my Lord.' On that Jibrīl said, 'Descend in Allāh's Name.' The Prophet then woke while he was in the Sacred Mosque (al-Masjid al-Ḥarām in Makkah)¹.

So the Messenger (ﷺ) descended pleased with that and at ease with it, and all praise is for Allāh.

Initially when the prayer was obligated it was in units of two (two *Rak'ah* for Dhuhr, 'Aṣr & 'Ishā) except for Maghrib, which was three units (*Rak'ah*). Then when the Prophet (ﷺ) migrated, the prayer of the resident was increased so it became units of four (four *Rak'ah* for Dhuhr, 'Aṣr & 'Ishā), except for Fajr and Maghrib. It is mentioned in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī who reported from "Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها) who said:

"Originally two units (*Rak'ah*) were prescribed in every prayer. When the Prophet (ﷺ) emigrated (to Madinah) four units (*Rak'ah*) were enjoined, while the prayer during a journey remained unchanged (i.e. still two units)"².

¹ Bukhārī (7517) and Muslim (162).

² Bukhārī (3935).

Imam Aḥmad (رحمه الله) reported: “Except for Maghrib, because it is odd (in number, so remains as three), and the Fajr, because recitation is elongated within it.”¹

The scholars – may Allāh have mercy upon them – differed: Was there obligatory prayer before the night of ascension?

Some of them said there was no obligatory prayer before the night of ascension, except for that which occurred in terms of the command regarding the night prayer without restriction.

Some of them however took the opinion that there was a two-unit obligatory morning Prayer and two-unit obligatory evening prayer.

And Allāh, the Most High, is most Knowledgeable.

¹ Musnad (6/265).

Chapter 3

Importance of the Prayer Legislatively

Indeed, the prayer has a great importance and high station in Islam. It is one of the great pillars of Islam, rather it is the most important of them after the two testifications; the testification that there is no deity worthy of worship in truth except Allāh and that Muḥammad (ﷺ) is the Messenger of Allāh.

Its importance is indicated by the following:

1. It is from the most important pillars of Islam, at the second level. That which is before it is the testification that there is no deity worthy of worship in truth except Allāh and that Muḥammad (ﷺ) is the Messenger of Allāh. Hence, it is the greatest pillar after the two testifications.
2. It is the foundational pillar of Islam, the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "The head of the affair is Islam, its foundation is the prayer and its pinnacle is Jihād"¹.
3. It has a distinguishing factor from the other pillars – other than the two testifications – which is that if a person abandons it then he is a disbeliever out of the fold of Islam, i.e. he is like Pharaoh and Hāmān and Ubayy b. Khalaf.

¹ Tirmidhī (2616).

We are not saying this from the angle of alarming or frightening people, nor are we [devising this] to encourage the people to perform it, rather we say this on the basis of evidence from the Qur'ān and Sunnah and statements of the companions (رضي الله عنهم)¹.

As for the other three pillars (giving Zakat, fasting Ramadan and Hajj), then the scholars have differed over the ruling of the one who abandons them – not out of rejection of their obligation, but rather out of laziness and negligence. However, the strongest opinion is that the one who abandons them is not a disbeliever.

As for the prayer, then the evidences from the Qur'ān and Sunnah, and in that which is narrated from the consensus of the companions indicate that the one who abandons the prayer is a disbeliever out of the fold of Islam – even if he accepts the obligation of it.

This indicates the importance of the prayer, and that it is from the vital affairs which is not befitting of even any intelligent individual, let alone a believer, to be careless or negligent of.

4. Allāh obligated it upon His Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) from above the seven heavens at the highest point creation can reach.

¹ Details of their statements to follow.

5. Allāh obligated it upon him on the best night with respect to the Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), and that is the night of Ascension (*al-Isrā' Wa al-Mi'raj*) in which he was taken up to the heavens until he was higher than the seventh heaven, and reached a place where he heard the sound of the pens writing; the pens of the decree that Allāh referred to in His statement:

﴿يَسْتَلْهُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ كُلَّ يَوْمٍ هُوَ فِي شَأْنٍ﴾ (٢٩)

“Whosoever is in the heavens and on earth begs of Him (its needs from Him). Every day He is (engaged) in some affair (such as giving honor or disgrace to some, life or death to some, etc.)!” (Al-Raḥmān: 29)

He enriches the poor one, and impoverishes the rich one, decrees illness upon the healthy one, and health upon the ill one, places death upon the living one, and gives life to the deceased, and other than that from His affairs that no-one can enumerate except Allāh.

6. Allāh obligated it without any intermediary between them (typically Jibrīl would bring the revelation, but the prayer was obligated directly to Muḥammad from Allāh)
7. Allāh initially obligated it as 50 prayers in the day and night upon the servants. The fact that it was 50 prayers indicates the love of Allāh for it, His consideration for it, and that it is a worship which is deserving of taking most of the time

of a person, since it is the connection between Allāh and His servant. A believer finds within it peace of mind and tranquility of the heart; for this reason, it was the coolness of the eye for the Prophet (ﷺ). So if a Muslim prayed 50 prayers – and every prayer took 15 minutes – then he would spend 12 hours and 15 minutes in prayer, hence if a person were preoccupied with the prayer (if it were 50 prayers) it would take up the majority of his time (every day).

Then the Prophet (ﷺ) returned to Allāh on several occasions until Allāh decreased them upon His servants from His gentleness, mercy and virtue, so He made them into five in action but 50 in reward on the weighing scale. In these five are the benefits of five, but the reward of 50, and this is from the blessing of Allāh.

This is not the same as 'every action having the reward multiplied ten-fold', because all good actions have a multiplication of reward by ten-fold. Hence, if it were upon that basis then there would be no difference between it and the other worships. Rather, these five are as if we have actually prayed 50, and every prayer has 10 rewards, so it amounts to 500 rewards for these five prayers.

Allāh multiplies the reward for whomsoever He wills, so this one good deed when it is done, it is as if it has been done ten times. If a person prays Dhuhr for example, then it is as if he prayed it ten times over, and if he prays 'Aṣr,

then it is as if he prayed it ten times over. Therefore, this is a distinction, that it is five in physical performance of action, but fifty in reward on the balance.

8. Allāh obligated for it purification from the minor and major impurities, as well impurity in the body, the clothing and the ground so that the one praying is upon the most perfect state of purification inwardly and outwardly.
9. The plentiful narrations mentioned regarding its affair in the Book of Allāh, the Most High and in the Sunnah of His Messenger (ﷺ) in terms of commands and prohibitions, encouragement and discouragement, informative and requests.
10. At the beginning of these five prayers, purification of the body as well as internal purification of the heart is combined, in order that the person enters into his prayer and stands before his Lord whilst he is upon purity of heart, body and location (place he prays upon). These considerations indicate the importance of the prayer.

Chapter 4

The Virtue of the Prayer and its Benefits

There are many narrations in the Book of Allāh and in the Sunnah of His Messenger (ﷺ) regarding the virtues of the prayer and guarding over it, as encouragement and motivation upon it.

Allāh said:

﴿ قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١﴾ الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ ﴿٢﴾ ﴾

“Successful indeed are the believers. Those who offer their Ṣalāh (prayers) with all solemnity and full submissiveness.” (Al-Mu’minūn: 1-2)

Up to His statement:

﴿ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَى صَلَاتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُونَ ﴿٩﴾ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْوَارِثُونَ ﴿١٠﴾ ﴾

“And those who strictly guard their (five compulsory congregational) Ṣalāh (prayers) (at their fixed stated hours). These are indeed the inheritors. Who shall inherit the Firdaus (Paradise). They shall dwell therein forever.” (Al-Mu’minūn: 9-11)

And Allāh said:

﴿ ۞ ﴾ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ خُلِقَ هَلُوعًا ﴿١٩﴾ إِذَا مَسَّهُ الشَّرُّ جَزُوعًا ﴿٢٠﴾ وَإِذَا مَسَّهُ الْخَيْرُ
 مَنُوعًا ﴿٢١﴾ إِلَّا الْمُصَلِّينَ ﴿٢٢﴾ الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَى صَلَاتِهِمْ دَائِمُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ وَالَّذِينَ فِي
 أَمْوَالِهِمْ حَقٌّ مَّعْلُومٌ ﴿٢٤﴾ لِلسَّائِلِ وَالْمَحْرُومِ ﴿٢٥﴾ وَالَّذِينَ يُصَدِّقُونَ بَيِّمٍ الَّذِينَ ﴿٢٦﴾
 وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ مِّنْ عَذَابِ رَبِّهِمْ مُّشْفِقُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾ إِنَّ عَذَابَ رَبِّهِمْ غَيْرُ مَأْمُونٍ ﴿٢٨﴾ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ
 لِفُرُوجِهِمْ حَافِظُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ أَزْوَاجِهِمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُومِينَ
 ﴿٣٠﴾ فَمَنِ ابْتَغَىٰ وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْعَادُونَ ﴿٣١﴾ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَمْتِنَتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رِعُونَ
 ﴿٣٢﴾ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ بِشَهَادَتِهِمْ قَائِمُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَىٰ صَلَاتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾ أُولَٰئِكَ فِي

جَنَّتِ مَكْرَمُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾ ﴿ ۞ ﴾

“Verily, man (disbeliever) was created very impatient; irritable (discontented) when evil touches him. And niggardly when good touches him. Except those who are devoted to Ṣalāh (prayers). Those who remain constant in their Ṣalāh (prayers). And those in whose wealth there is a recognized right. For the beggar who asks, and for the unlucky who has lost his property and wealth, (and his means of living has been straitened). And those who believe in the Day of Recompense. And those who fear the torment of their Lord. Verily, the torment of their Lord is that before which none can feel secure. And those who guard their chastity (i.e. private parts from illegal sexual acts). Except with their wives and those (women

slaves) whom their right hands possess — for (then) they are not blameworthy. But whosoever seeks beyond that, then it is those who are trespassers. And those who keep their trusts and covenants. And those who stand firm in their testimonies. And those who guard their Ṣalāh (prayers) well; such shall dwell in the Gardens (i.e. Paradise) honored.” (Al-Ma‘ārij: 19-35)

The point regarding its virtues is that Allāh began these characteristics with the prayer and concluded them with the prayer, and that is not for any other reason except due to the virtue of the prayer.

And Allāh said:

﴿ أَتْلُ مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ ﴾

“Recite (O Muḥammad) what has been revealed to you of the Book (the Qur’ān), and perform As-Ṣalāh.” (Al-‘Ankabūt: 45).

So He specified prayer from among all the worships, and that is evidence of its virtue also.

And He said:

﴿ حَافِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَى وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ ﴾

“Guard strictly (five obligatory) Ṣalāh (the prayers) especially the middle Ṣalāh (i.e. the best prayer - ‘Aṣr).

And stand before Allāh with obedience [and do not speak to others during the Ṣalāh (prayers)].” (Al-Baqarah: 238).

The command to guard over it strictly indicates it has a great importance.

The prayer is the first physical worship obligated upon the Muslims, and the first action the servant is held accountable upon from the rights of Allāh (it is from the right of Allāh that a person pays) on the Day of Judgment, so in the hadith it mentions:

“Indeed the first affair Allāh obligated upon the people from their religion was the prayer, and the last of what remains is the prayer, and the first he is held accountable upon is the prayer, and Allāh says: ‘Look to the prayer of my servant.’ If it is complete, it is written as complete, and if it is deficient, He says: ‘Look, has my servant any supererogatory prayer?’, and if supererogatory is found the (deficiency) from the obligatory is completed.”¹

‘Abdullah b. ‘Amr (رضي الله عنه) narrated:

“A man came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and asked him about the best of actions. So the Prophet (ﷺ) said, ‘The prayer.’ Then the man said, ‘Then what?’ The Prophet (ﷺ) said, ‘The prayer.’ Then the man said,

¹ Abū Dāwūd (864), Tirmidhī (413), Nasā’ī (466), Ibn Mājah (1425), and Abū Ya‘lā (7/153).

‘Then what?’ The Prophet (ﷺ) said, ‘The prayer.’ three times. So when the man was persistent the Prophet (ﷺ) said, ‘Jihād in the path of Allāh’¹.

The Prophet (ﷺ) also said:

“Be upright, and (even if) you will not encompass everything (all forms of good action), and know that the best of your actions is the prayer, and no one guards over the *Wuḍū* (ablution) except a believer.”²

And he was asked about an action that would enter (the one who does it) into Paradise, so he said:

“Upon you is to prostrate to Allāh a lot, for indeed you do not prostrate a prostration to Allāh except that Allāh raises you a level by it, and removes a sin from you by it”³.

And these narrations (mentioned here) on the virtue of the prayer are a few from among many, and we have limited ourselves with them fearing elongation.

As for the benefits of the prayer then they are many, it is not possible to enumerate them, so from amongst them are:

¹ Aḥmad (2/172) and Ibn Ḥibbān (1722).

² Ibn Mājah (277 & 278), Dārimī (681), and Aḥmad (5/276).

³ Muslim 488.

1. In it is the coolness of the eye, tranquility of the heart, and comfort of oneself. Hence, the Prophet (ﷺ) would say,

“Women and fragrance have been made beloved to me from the world, and the coolness of my eyes has been made in the Prayer.”¹

And he used to say,

“Stand O Bilal and comfort us with the prayer.”²

Meaning make *adhān*³ so we can then pray. So the prayer is remembrance, and through the remembrance of Allāh the hearts find tranquility, and it is a connection between the servant and his Lord. The servant stands before his Lord in submission and humility, he glorifies Allāh with His praise, recites His book, exalts Him with his statements and actions, praises Him with what Allāh is truly deserving of, and asks for his religious and worldly needs, so it is a ripe garden with every lovely kind of growth within it.

2. It prevents from great sins of every kind and evil of every kind if a person prays properly in the manner he has been commanded. Allāh, the Most High said:

﴿إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ﴾

¹ Nasā'ī (3391), and Aḥmad (3/128).

² Abū Dāwūd (4985), and Aḥmad (5/364).

³ Call to prayer.

“Verily, Ṣalāh (the prayer) prevents from Al-Faḥshā' (i.e. great sins of every kind, unlawful sexual intercourse) and Al-Munkar (i.e. disbelief, polytheism, and every kind of evil wicked deed)” (Al-'Ankabūt: 45).

That is due to what occurs for the heart in terms of returning to Allāh, being present before Him, strength in Īmān, enlightenment of it, and rectification of his affairs, so the taste of that does not cease in his heart (even after the prayer, in between to the next one). Hence, every time he intends an evil or sin he remembers that connection between him and his Lord and so distances himself from it.

3. It is an aid for the person in his religious and worldly affairs. Allāh, the Most High said:

﴿وَأَسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ﴾

“And seek help in patience and As-Ṣalāh (the prayer)”
(al-Baqarah: 45)

And if the “Prophet (ﷺ) was concerned by an affair he would pray”¹ (to alleviate the worry).

4. Allāh has given great reward and goodness to the Prayer. The Prophet (ﷺ) said,

“Allāh has prescribed five prayers upon the servants, so whomsoever performs them, and does not neglect anything from them belittling their right, he has a

¹ Abū Dāwūd (1319).

covenant from Allāh that He will enter him into Paradise.”¹

The Prophet (ﷺ) also said,

“The Prayer is light.”²

Meaning, in the heart, in the face, in the grave and upon resurrection.

It is reported from ‘Abdullah b. ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he mentioned the Prayer one day and said,

“Whomsoever guards over it for him is a light, a proof, and salvation on the Day of Resurrection, and whomsoever does not guard over it has no light, no proof, and no salvation on the Day of Resurrection. He will be with Qārūn, and Pharaoh, and Hāmān and Ubayy b. Khalaf.” Collected by Aḥmad with a good chain of narration³. Hence, whomsoever guards over these prayers and performs them upon the correct legislative manner has a light, proof and salvation on the Day of Resurrection.

5. It is expiation for the minor sins and purification from errors. It is reported from Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) that he heard the Messenger of Allāh say (ﷺ),

¹ Abū Dāwūd (1420), Nasāʾī (462), and Ibn Mājah (1401).

² Muslim (223).

³ Aḥmad (2/169).

“If there was a river at the door of anyone of you and he took a bath in it five times a day, would you notice any dirt on him?” They said, “Not a trace of dirt would be left.” The Prophet (ﷺ) said, “That is the example of the five (daily compulsory) prayers with which Allāh wipes away evil deeds.”¹

And he also said, “The five prayers, and Friday prayer to Friday prayer (*Jum‘ah*), are expiation for what is in between them (of minor sins) as long as the major sins are not performed”².

So these five prayers wash away the sins for the one who prays, so he is cleansed of the sins.

6. The congregation and unity of the Muslims that occurs from the congregational prayers in one place, and the mutual acquaintance and affinity that results between them, as well as (an opportunity) to educate the ignorant and alert the negligent. Also the open demonstration of Islamic practices (*adhān*, prayer, etc.), and other than that from the great benefits.
7. It is a connection between the one praying and his Lord. When the one praying stands in his prayer, he faces his Lord, and when the servant says, “All the praises and thanks be to Allāh, the Lord of the whole of the creation

¹ Bukhārī (528) and Muslim (667).

² Muslim (233).

(mankind, jinn and all that exists)", Allāh the Most High says, "My servant has praised Me." When he says, "The Most Gracious, the Most Merciful", Allāh the Most High says, "My servant has lauded me." And when the servant says, "The Only Owner (and the Only Ruling Judge) of the Day of Recompense (i.e. the Day of Resurrection)", Allāh, the Most High says, "My servant has glorified me", and he (the narrator) said once (instead), "My servant has entrusted himself to Me." When he says, "You (Alone) we worship, and You (Alone) we ask for help (for each and everything)", Allāh says, "This is between Me and My servant, and for My servant is what he asks for." When he says, "Guide us to the Straight Way", Allāh says, "This is between Me and My servant, and for My servant is what he asks for."¹

So can you find a connection stronger than that connection? Allāh responds to your recitation ayah by ayah (verse by verse) whilst He is above His Throne and you are upon His Earth, indicating the importance He gives to your prayer, and the actualization of it.

And what we have mentioned from these virtues is not by way of comprehensively covering them all, rather it is only a few mentioned from many that exist. It is amazing that some of the Muslims are ignorant of these virtues, or feign ignorance or

¹ Muslim (395).

negligence of them, to the extent the Prayer in their eyes becomes from the most unrequired of actions, and the least of them in value. They do not hold any weight for it in the accountability of their actions, and neither do they spend any time on it from their lifetime; to the extent that some of them may even ridicule it, and take it as mockery, ridicule and idle play, and they mock those who pray - we ask Allāh for safety.

Chapter 5

Warning from Neglecting the Prayer

Since the Prayer has this great virtue and these great benefits, losing it is a great deprivation and a grave deficiency in Islam; therefore, Allāh and His Messenger (ﷺ) warned against neglecting it, and various punishments have been legislated as a consequence of this. Allāh, the Most High said:

﴿فَوَيْلٌ لِلْمُصَلِّينَ ۖ الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ ﴿٥﴾﴾

“So woe unto those performers of Ṣalāh (prayers) (hypocrites). Those who delay their Ṣalāh (prayer from their stated fixed times).” (Al-Mā‘ūn: 4-5).

And Allāh said:

﴿خَلَفَ مِنْ بَعدِهِمْ خَلْفٌ أَضَاعُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَاتَّبَعُوا الشَّهْوَاتِ فَسُوفَ يَلْقَوْنَ

غِيَا ۖ إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَأُولَٰئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ

شَيْئًا ﴿٦﴾﴾

“Then, there has succeeded them a posterity who have given up Al-Ṣalāh (the prayers) [i.e. made their Ṣalāh (prayers) to be lost, either by not offering them or by not offering them perfectly or by not offering them in their proper fixed times, etc.] and have followed lusts. So they will be thrown in Hell. Except those who repent and

believe (in the Oneness of Allāh and His Messenger Muḥammad (ﷺ)), and work righteousness. Such will enter Paradise and they will not be wronged in aught.” (Maryam: 59-60)

And Allāh said in describing the hypocrites:

﴿إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَهُوَ خَدِيعُهُمْ وَإِذَا قَامُوا إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ قَامُوا كَسَالَى يُرَاءُونَ النَّاسَ وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا﴾ (١١٢)

“Verily, the hypocrites seek to deceive Allāh, but it is He Who deceives them. And when they stand up for Al-Ṣalāh (the prayer), they stand with laziness and to be seen of men, and they do not remember Allāh but little.” (Al-Nisā: 142)

And He said regarding the people of the Fire when they are asked:

﴿مَا سَلَكَكُمْ فِي سَقَرٍ﴾ (٤٤) ﴿قَالُوا لَمْ نَكُ مِنَ الْمُصَلِّينَ﴾ (٤٣) ﴿وَلَمْ نَكُ نَطْعَمْ﴾ (٤١) ﴿الْمِسْكِينَ﴾ (٤٤) ﴿وَكُنَّا نَخُوضُ مَعَ الْخَائِضِينَ﴾ (٤٥) ﴿وَكُنَّا نَكْذِبُ يَوْمَ الدِّينِ﴾ (٤٦) ﴿حَتَّى أَتْنَا الْآيِقِينَ﴾ (٤٧)

“What has caused you to enter Hell?” They will say: “We were not of those who used to offer their Ṣalāh (prayers). “Nor we used to feed Al-Miskīn (the poor), and we used to talk falsehood (all that which Allāh hated) with vain

talkers. And we used to belie the Day of Recompense, until there came to us (the death) that is certain.” (Al-Mudatthir: 42-47)

And Allāh said:

﴿وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ ارْكَعُوا لَا يَرْكَعُونَ﴾

“And when it is said to them: "Bow down yourself (in prayer)!" They bow not down (offer not their prayers).” (Al-Mursalāt: 48).

Meaning, when they are commanded with the prayer they do not pray.

And in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī it is reported the Prophet (ﷺ) saw in a dream (and said),

“We came across a man lying down, and behold, another man was standing over his head, holding a big rock. Behold, he was throwing the rock at the man's head, injuring it. The rock rolled away and the thrower followed it and took it back. By the time he reached the man his head returned to its normal state. The thrower then did the same as he had done before...” so the Prophet (ﷺ) asked about him and it was said, “He is the one who studies the Qur’ān and then neither recites

it nor acts upon its orders, and sleeps, neglecting the obligatory prayers..."¹

And the Prophet (ﷺ) informed us that the one who does not guard over these prayers has no light, or proof or salvation on the Day of Resurrection, and he will be resurrected alongside the heads of *Kufr* (disbelief), with Pharaoh, Hāmān, Qārūn and Ubayy b. Khalaf.

So fear Allāh, the Most High, and establish the prayer, and guard over it and its times, and discipline your children upon it, for indeed the Prophet (ﷺ) commanded you to,

“Command your children with the prayer when they are seven, and hit them upon it when they are 10 (if they are not praying).”²

So who from amongst you has adhered to this responsibility that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) has placed upon you? Most people are negligent of this, but they are diligent when it comes to their wealth and worldly affairs. They stay awake night and day to increase this wealth, then they leave it to whomsoever inherits it after them, yet they are negligent of their children who will be the coolness and delight of their eyes in this World and the Hereafter if they become righteous. The Prophet (ﷺ) said,

¹ Bukhārī (7047).

² Abū Dāwūd (495).

“When the servant dies his deeds are cut off except for three: ongoing charity, knowledge that is benefitted from, and a righteous child who supplicates for him.”¹

Do you not fear then O Muslims regarding this responsibility? Do you not fear that your punishment for abandoning your children's righteous upbringing will be that they turn disobedient and wrongful toward you, an exact recompense, (i.e. you were in essence evil to them by not giving them a righteous upbringing, hence they become evil towards you when they grow up). Indeed, the one who does not fulfill the right of Allāh upon him in terms of bringing up his children upon piety, he is on the verge of having his children not fulfill his rights (rights of parents) when he grows old and dies.

So upon you O Muslims is to nurture your children, whilst they are being raised, in taking on board and learning the love of Prayer, and the love of attending the mosques.

¹ Muslim (1631).

Chapter 6

Ruling on the One Who Abandons the Prayer

Abandoning the Prayer is two types:

The First Type: That it is abandoned with **rejection of its obligation**; this is *Kufr* (disbelief) no doubt, since rejecting the obligation of the prescribed prayer is disbelief due to belying Allāh, His Messenger, and the believers (companions). Allāh the Most High said:

﴿وَمَنْ يُشَاقِقِ الرَّسُولَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا نَبَيَ لَهُ الْهُدَىٰ وَيَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ سَبِيلِ

الْمُؤْمِنِينَ تُولَاهُ مَا تَوَلَّىٰ وَنُصْلِهِ جَهَنَّمَ ۚ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا ﴿١١٥﴾﴾

“And whoever contradicts and opposes the Messenger (Muḥammad (صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ)) after the right path has been shown clearly to him, and follows other than the believers' way, We shall keep him in the path he has chosen, and burn him in Hell - what an evil destination.”
(Al-Nisā: 115)

Unless he rejected its obligation due to being new to Islam, so it is possible he may be ignorant of the ruling, so he does not disbelieve until he is made aware of the ruling. If he then persists upon opposing after that then he has disbelieved.

The second type: Abandoning the prayer due to laziness and carelessness with an acknowledgement and acceptance of its obligation. This type of person is called to it and commanded with it, and so if he prays then so be it (he has rectified), but if he continues upon abandoning it then the scholars have differed regarding him. Some of them said he has disbelieved and is prescribed the capital punishment as a disbeliever and is not prayed upon (*Janāzah*) and he is not buried with the Muslims.

The evidence for the statement of these scholars is from the Qur'ān, it is the statement of Allāh the Most High about the Polytheists (*Mushrikūn*):

﴿فَإِنْ تَابُوا وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ فَإِخْوَانُكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ

وَنُقْصِلُ الْأَيَّاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١١﴾

"But if they repent, perform As-Ṣalāh (Iqamat-as-Ṣalāh) and give Zakat, then they are your brethren in religion. (In this way) We explain the Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) in detail for a people who know." (Tawbah: 11)

Here we have a conditional sentence, and the condition has within it three affairs that lead (in unison) to one end result or answer. The first condition, "**But if they repent.**" The second condition, "**Perform al-Ṣalāh (the prayer).**" And the third condition, "**And give Zakat.**" All of these are the condition.

As for the answer, **“Then they are your brethren in Religion”**, it is one response only. The principle is: if an affair is dependent on one condition or multiple conditions, then the answer or end result does not arise unless the condition is fulfilled (which, if made up of multiple clauses, requires all clauses to be fulfilled), and here Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic has made three conditions for the establishment of brotherhood in religion:

1. Repentance from Shirk (polytheism)
2. Establishment of Prayer
3. Giving of Zakat.

If any one of these three conditions is absent then the end result cannot arise, which is the brotherhood in religion.

I will give an example to clarify the affair. If I said, “If such and such visits you, and gives you such and such a book and you read it – then honor him.” These are three conditions.

So, if he visited you but did not give you the book, then you do not honor him. If he says to you, “Why are you not honoring me?” You say, “Because you have not fulfilled the condition”, (which here was made up of not one, but three distinct items).

If he visited you and gave you the book, but prevented you from reading it, then you do not honor him. If he says, “Why are you not honoring me?” You say, “Because you did not fulfill the condition.”

If he visited you, and gave you the book, and allowed you to read it and so you read it, now he deserves to be honored.

In the noble ayah (it says), if they repent, and establish the prayer, and give the zakat, then they deserve to be our brothers. However, if they do not fulfill these three descriptions, then they do not deserve to be our brothers in religion.

Brotherhood in religion is not negated except through clear *Kufr* (disbelief), because a Muslim is still your brother whatever he commits of sin; if he fornicates, steals, drinks alcohol or murders, he is still your brother (i.e. sinning does not declare him a disbeliever). Some people may be surprised by this, how can he do these major crimes and despite that still be our brother? We say Allāh said:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِصَاصُ فِي الْقَتْلِ الْحُرُّ بِالْحُرِّ وَالْعَبْدُ

بِالْعَبْدِ وَالْأُنْثَىٰ بِالْأُنْثَىٰ فَمَنْ عُفِيَ لَهُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ شَيْءٌ فَإِنِّاعٌ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ﴾

“O you who believe! Al-Qiṣāṣ (the Law of Equality in punishment) is prescribed for you in case of murder: the free for the free, the slave for the slave, and the female for the female. But if the killer is forgiven by the brother (or the relatives, etc.) of the killed against blood money, then adhering to it with fairness and payment of the blood money to the heir should be made in fairness.” (Al-Baqarah: 178)

The law of equality in punishment is established in the case of murder with intent, despite that Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic says, “But if the killer is forgiven by the brother (or the relatives, etc.)”, therefore this murderer who purposely murdered does not exit from Islam, because he is a brother to the deceased, and Allāh the Mighty and Majestic addressed the people with His statement, “O you who believe! Al-Qiṣāṣ (the Law of Equality in punishment) is prescribed for you in case of murder.” So he is a brother to him even though he killed him. Therefore, brotherhood in the religion is not disaffirmed due to sins.

Another example: a believer fighting his brother is a sin, and *Kufr* (disbelief), however he does not exit from the fold of Islam due to the statement of Allāh, the Most High:

﴿وَلِنْ طَائِفَتَانِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ اقْتَتَلُوا فَأَصْلَحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا فَإِنْ بَغَتْ إِحْدَاهُمَا عَلَى

الْأُخْرَىٰ فَفَعَلُوا آلَتِي تَبَغَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَفِيءَ إِلَىٰ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ فَاءَتْ فَأَصْلَحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا

بِالْعَدْلِ وَأَقْسِطُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ ﴿٩﴾ إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلَحُوا

بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

“And if two parties or groups among the believers fall to fighting, then make peace between them both, but if one of them rebels against the other, then fight you (all) against the one that rebels till it complies with the Command of Allāh; then if it complies, then make

reconciliation between them justly, and be equitable. Verily! Allāh loves those who are equitable. The believers are nothing else than brothers (in Islamic religion). So make reconciliation between your brothers, and fear Allāh, that you may receive mercy.” (Al-Ḥujurāt: 9-10).

The believers, despite the fact that they fought each other are brothers, and the third party who reconciles between them are brothers to them. Due to this He said, “The believers are nothing else than brothers (in Islamic religion). So make reconciliation between your brothers...”

Therefore, we say, brotherhood upon Īmān is not disaffirmed (cut-off) due to sins, even if they are great; it is not disaffirmed except through disbelief.

As for the Sunnah, then there is the hadith of Jābir (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said,

“Indeed between a man and *shirk* (polytheism) and disbelief is the abandonment of the prayer.”¹

So the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) made *shirk* (polytheism) separate and distinct from Islam, and he made the dividing factor (that takes a person from Islaam out to disbelief), the abandonment of the prayer; therefore, abandoning the prayer is disbelief.

¹ Muslim (82).

And in the hadith of Buraydah b. al-Husayb (رضي الله عنه), which is reported in the books of the Sunnah, the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said,

“The covenant between us and them is the prayer, so whosoever abandons it has disbelieved.”¹

And he (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said,

“The head of the affair is Islaam, and its pillar is the prayer.”²

If the pillar goes, the building collapses.

‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) said,

“There is no share of Islam for the one who abandons the Prayer.”³

And ‘Abdullah b. Shaqīq (رضي الله عنه) said – and he is from the best of the *Tābi‘ūn* (the generation after the companions),

“The companions of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) did not used to consider the abandonment of anything from the actions as disbelief other than the prayer.”⁴

And this is like a consensus from the companions, that the one who abandons the prayer is a disbeliever. And several scholars

¹ Tirmidhī (2621), Nasā’ī (464), and Ibn Mājah (1079).

² Tirmidhī (2612).

³ Dāraqṭunī (2/52).

⁴ Tirmidhī (2622).

have reported the existence of consensus upon the fact that the one who abandons the prayer is a disbeliever, from them is Ishāq b. Rāhawayh (رحمه الله) the famous scholar.

‘Abdullah b. Naṣr (رحمه الله) said, “I heard Ishāq b. Rāhawayh say: “It is authenticated from the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) that the one who abandons the prayer is a disbeliever, and such was the opinion of the people of knowledge from the time of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) to this day of ours now, that the one who leaves the prayer purposely without reason until the time for it exists is a disbeliever.”

Ibn Ḥazm (رحمه الله) said,

“It has been narrated from ‘Umar, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘Awf, Mu‘adh b. Jabal, Abū Hurairah and others from the companions, that whomsoever leaves one obligatory prayer purposely until the time exits for it then he is a disbeliever, an apostate, and we do not know of anyone opposing these companions (in this opinion).”¹

Al-Mundhirī mentioned it too from Ibn Mas‘ūd, Ibn ‘Abbās, Jābir bin ‘Abdullah and Abū Dardā, and from other than the companions – Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, Ishāq b. Rāhawayh, ‘Abdullah b. al-Mubārak, al-Nakhaī, and he mentioned others.

¹ *Al-Muḥalla* (2/242).

And Ibn al-Qayyim (رحمته الله) said – within the context of mentioning the evidences of those who state that the one who abandons the prayer is a disbeliever¹:

“It is unimaginable upon normal habit and nature that a man believes absolutely and completely that Allāh has obligated upon him in every night and day five prayers and that He will punish him severely upon abandoning them; and despite that he persists upon abandoning them; this is absolutely unimaginable.”

Some scholars, however, took the opinion that the one who abandons the prayer is killed as per prescribed punishment upon a Muslim, and not as a disbeliever. So he is killed (for abandoning the prayer and not returning to it after admonishment), and he is washed and shrouded, and prayed upon (*Janāzah prayer*), and he is buried along with the Muslims (graveyard of Muslims). Supplication for forgiveness is made for him due to the statement of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), “Whomsoever testifies that none has the right to be worshipped but Allāh Alone Who has no partners, and that Muḥammad is His Slave and His Apostle, and that Jesus is Allāh's Slave and His Apostle and His Word which He bestowed on Mary and a Spirit created by Him, and that Paradise is true, and Hell is true, Allāh will admit him into Paradise with the deeds which he had done, even if those deeds

¹ ‘The Prayer & Ruling Upon the One Who Abandons It’ (p. 60).

were few.”¹ The hadith seems to apparently indicate that he will enter Paradise even if he didn't pray.

Ibn al-Qayyim (رحمته الله) said – after mentioning the evidences of the two groups:

“If *īmān* disappears by the disappearance of the actions of the heart, then it is not disapproved that it can disappear by the disappearance of the greatest action of the limbs, especially if it necessitates a lack of love in the heart and submission, which in turn necessitates the lack of definitive belief as has been established previously. For the lack of obedience of the heart necessitates the lack of obedience of the limbs, since if the heart was obedient and submissive, the limbs would be submissive.”²

Thereafter, (we can say) both groups are agreed upon capital punishment for the one who abandons the prayer, either as a disbeliever as the texts apparently indicate, or as a prescribed legislative punishment (such that he is still Muslim), as some of the other texts indicate he is not a disbeliever. This consensus from the two groups indicates the severity of the crime of the one who abandons the prayer, and that there is no place for him amongst the Muslims due to the greatness of his crime.

So I am amazed at the people who are careless with their prayer in this time, and they are preoccupied with their desires. They

¹ Bukhārī (3435) and Muslim (28).

² The Prayer & Ruling Upon the One Who Abandons It (p. 71).

find an action that at most takes an hour (of the day) altogether cumbersome, and they spend hours upon hours in affairs that have no good in them. Do they not think that they are to be resurrected for that great Day, that day the people will stand before the Lord of all creation?

So what religion is there for a person who abandons the prayer? Despite its ease in performance, and the minimal time it takes, (in addition to) the great reward of it, and great benefits of it for the heart and body, for the individual and society, and for the (rectification of) statements and actions. It is an aid to the person in his actions, just like when the Prophet (ﷺ) was concerned with an affair on his mind he would stand to pray, because Allāh said:

﴿وَأَسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ وَإِنَّهَا لَكَبِيرَةٌ إِلَّا عَلَى الْخَاشِعِينَ﴾

“And seek help in patience and Al-Ṣalāh (the prayer) and truly it is extremely heavy and hard except for Al-Khāshi‘ūn [i.e. the true believers in Allāh – those who obey Allāh with full submission, fear much from His Punishment, and believe in His Promise (Paradise, etc.) and in His Warnings (Hell, etc.)]”. (Al-Baqarah: 45).

What religion remains for a person who abandons the prayer, and a threat has come in the Qur’ān and Sunnah of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) concerning the one who is careless about the prayer or negligent with it? Allāh, the Most High said:

﴿ خَلَفَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ خَلْفٌ أَضَاعُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَاتَّبَعُوا الشَّهْوَةَ فَسَوْفَ يَلْقَوْنَ
عَذَابًا ۝٥٩ إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَأُولَٰئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ

شَيْئًا ۝٦٠﴾

“Then, there has succeeded them a posterity who have given up Al-Ṣalāh (the prayers) [i.e. made their Ṣalāh (prayers) to be lost, either by not offering them or by not offering them perfectly or by not offering them in their proper fixed times, etc.] and have followed lusts. So they will be thrown in Hell. Except those who repent and believe (in the Oneness of Allāh and His Messenger Muḥammad), and work righteousness. Such will enter Paradise and they will not be wronged in aught.” (Maryam: 59-60).

And this noble ayah is clear, that the one who neglects the prayer and follows his desires is not a believer, because Allāh says,

﴿ فَوَيْلٌ لِلْمُصَلِّينَ ۝٤ الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ ۝٥﴾

“So woe unto those performers of Ṣalāh (prayers) (hypocrites), who delay their Ṣalāh (prayer) from their stated fixed times.” (Al-Mā’ūn: 4-5).

And the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) informed us that the one who does not guard over these prayers then he has no light, nor proof,

nor salvation on the Day of Resurrection, and he will be raised alongside the heads of disbelief like Pharaoh, Hāmān, Qārūn and Ubayy bin Khalaf.

What religion is there for a person who abandons this prayer whilst believing in this threat upon the one who is careless of it and still neglects it? How is it possible for a person to say “I testify that there is no deity worthy of worship in truth except Allāh and that Muḥammad (ﷺ) is the Messenger of Allāh”, yet he does not establish the prayer?

Some people offer justification and say, “I am Muslim, I say that there is no deity worthy of worship in truth except Allāh and that Muḥammad (ﷺ) is the Messenger of Allāh.” So we say to them: this is not sufficient for you with Allāh, not until you submit to Allāh, and are submissive to His legislation (*Sharī'ah*), for indeed Īmān is that which is settled in the heart, and is testified to by the limbs. Hence, abandoning the prayer is apostasy and disbelief in Allāh, and apostasy in Islam has rulings related to this World and the Hereafter:

1. His marriage is invalidated from his wife, and it is permissible for her to marry other than him, his relations with her are thereafter deemed as him having relations with a foreign woman (i.e. she is not his wife any longer).
2. His slaughtering or game, (prey that he catches), are deemed unlawful to take.

3. He is not the guardian (*Walī*) to any of his sons or daughters, so if he marries off one of his daughters whilst he is a non-praying person, then her marriage is invalid.
4. The apostate is not acknowledged upon his apostasy; rather he is prescribed capital punishment if he persists upon it.
5. He is not washed (upon death) because water does not purify him since he is a disbeliever.
6. *Janāzah* prayer (the prayer upon the deceased) is not prayed upon him.
7. Forgiveness is not sought for him, and supplication for mercy upon him is not made.
8. He is not buried alongside the Muslims.
9. His wealth is not inherited, rather it goes to the Muslim state.

As for the rulings of the Hereafter:

Then indeed, the one who dies an apostate and dies not praying; he is prevented from entering Paradise and enters the Fire to remain therein forever.

It is not permissible for any of you – if you have someone that dies who did not use to pray – to put them forward to the Muslims for *Janāzah* to be prayed upon him, rather what is required is that he is taken out far away and a grave is dug for him to be buried in, because the disbelief of an apostate in Islam is more severe than the disbelief of a Jew or Christian, and we seek refuge in Allāh.

So fear Allāh, and guard over your prayers – what remains of your religion if you have lost the prayer?

“Indeed the final affair that will be lost from your religion is the prayer.”¹

Imam Aḥmad (رحمته الله) said, “With anything, if the last part of it goes, then nothing remains of it.” (i.e. if the prayer goes, then nothing remains of your religion).

¹ Al-Hākim in Mustadrak (4/469).

Chapter 7

Conditions of the Prayer

Conditions of the prayer are that which the correctness of the prayer is dependent upon, because a “condition” linguistically is a sign. Allāh, the Most High said:

﴿فَهَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا السَّاعَةَ أَنْ تَأْتِيَهُمْ بَغْتَةً فَقَدْ جَاءَ أَشْرَاطُهَا فَأَنَّى لَهُمْ إِذَا جَاءَهُمْ

ذِكْرُهُمْ﴾

“Do they then await (anything) other than the Hour, that it should come upon them suddenly? But some of its portents (indications and signs) have already come...” (Muḥammad: 18). Referring to its signs.

And a “condition” in the terminology of specialists in principles of fiqh (jurisprudence) is: “That which necessitates absence (of an affair) in its absence, and does not necessitate presence (of an affair) in its presence,” (meaning if the condition is absent, the affair that requires this condition can therefore not exist independently, however conversely, if the condition is present, it does not necessitate that the affair that required it will definitely be present too).

The First Condition: Entry of the Time

This is the most important of them, and as a result many of the obligations are voided, taking into consideration the time [i.e. as the time has exited]. Phrasing it as “entry of the time” is more accurate than saying just “time”, since the prayer can be correct after the time, if it was due to a legitimate reason, such as sleep or forgetfulness.

Due to this, it is binding that you understand the difference between the statement of the scholars “entry of the time is a condition”, as opposed to their statement regarding *Jum'ah* (Friday) prayer “the time is a condition”, since *Jum'ah* is not correct after the time ever, as for other prayers they can be correct after the time if reason existed.

The evidence that the entry of time is a condition for the prayer is the statement of Allāh, the Most High:

﴿إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَوْقُوتًا ۝١٠٣﴾

“Verily, the prayer is enjoined on the believers at fixed hours.” (Al-Nisā: 103), meaning it is obligated at fixed times.

So the prayer is invalid before the time, even if the person was ignorant or forgetful, and it is invalid after the time unless he is excused (with legitimate reason).

Let us present the times:

The Time for Fajr: From (the true) dawn when it becomes clear, till sunrise. The horizon is in darkness all night, but when the sun approaches from the East on the horizon, the sunlight appears. So if it (the light) becomes clear spread across the horizon from North to South then this is entry time for Fajr.

The difference between dawn and sunrise fluctuates between 1 hour and 15 minutes to 1 hour and 30 minutes in accordance to the different seasons.

The Time for Dhuhr: From post meridiem (just after the sun passes the highest point of the sky, i.e. just after midday), till the shadow of everything is equal to its size in addition to the shadow of the post meridiem sun.

When the sun has arisen, if you were to place down a fixed object like a stick or other than it, a shadow would appear. The more the sun rises, the smaller the shadow would become until it stops, (no shadow remains since the sun is directly above at midday). So when it finishes, then begins to increase again (shadow starts again), then (that shows) the sun has gone beyond the midday point. Make a marker from when it begins to increase again, when this shadow increases from this marker to its top, the size of the object, then Dhuhr time has exited, and 'Aṣr time has entered.

The Time for 'Aṣr: From the exit of Dhuhr time till the sun yellows, meaning it becomes yellowy in color, and this differs in winter and summer. It may become yellowy in color an

hour before sunset or less than that, closer to sunset time. The time of necessity is till sunset, (i.e. from the point when it becomes yellowy till actual sunset the 'Aṣr prayer is only allowed in necessity, not from choice to delay till then). Therefore, it is not permissible to delay till the yellowing of the sun.

The Time for Maghrib: From sunset till the disappearance of the twilight (the rays of red light left behind after sunset), due to the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ), “The time of Maghrib prayer (continues) as long as the twilight does not disappear.”¹

The intent of the ‘twilight’ here is the red twilight and not the white twilight. This is not known except if a person exited out of the city and observed the sunset, to the West. When the (leftover) redness disappears the time of Maghrib has exited and the time of ‘Ishā has entered. This fluctuates between 1 hour and 30 minutes in our areas (where the Shaikh resided), and 1 hour and 15 minutes. Sometimes the difference between sunset and the disappearance of the twilight is 1 hour and 15 minutes, and sometimes it is 1 hour and 30 minutes.

The Time for ‘Ishā: From the disappearance of the red twilight till the middle of the night. The manner of working that out is to look at the time between sunset and rise of the true dawn and take half of that, and that is half of the night. So

¹ Muslim (612).

if we were to say that between sunset and the adhān (call to prayer) of Fajr is 10 hours, then half of it is 5 hours, and so if sunset was 6pm, then half of the night is 11pm.

Therefore, we must pray before 11pm, because it is not permissible to delay the 'Ishā till half of the night (i.e. to go beyond that), since half of the night is the last time for 'Ishā prayer.

This will differ in accordance to differences in summer and winter; in summer the night is short, and in winter it is long. The important point is that you work out the halfway point between the sunset and rise of the true dawn.

An Issue: Is it better to pray at the beginning times early or delay till the end of the allocated times?

The answer: It is better in all five prayers to pray early at the beginning times, except for 'Ishā, for it is better to delay it as long as it is not a burden. The evidence is that when the Prophet (ﷺ) delayed the 'Ishā one night to its end time (just before middle of the night), he exited and said, "Was it not that I would burden my people (my Ummah [nation]), I would have commanded them to pray ('Ishā) like this, (at the end time)."¹

But since the men are required to pray in congregation, and the people pray 'Ishā at the beginning of its time to remove

¹ Bukhārī (571) and Muslim (638).

difficulty, it becomes obligatory to pray in congregation at the beginning time.

Based upon that, if a group of people were on a trip or journey and they said, "Which is better (for us), that we delay the 'Ishā prayer or we bring it forward (and pray at the beginning time)?" We would say, it is better to delay, (since in their situation if they are travelling away from any masjid and have no congregation they can attend, they are free to choose when to pray their own congregation, hence delaying is better if they are able).

Similarly, if a man missed 'Ishā congregation, then he says, is it better for him to pray now or to delay till the end time? We would say to him it is better you delay till the end time.

Similarly, women in their homes, it is better for them to delay 'Ishā till the end time – unless it is a burden upon them – since there is no obligation of (having to attend) congregation, (so they can choose when to pray).

If a person says, "Is it better for me to pray in congregation that prays at the beginning time of 'Ishā, or to delay till the end time (and miss the congregation)?" We say, pray in congregation, because prayer in congregation is obligatory, and as for delaying 'Ishā till its end time, then that is Sunnah only. There is no conflict between an obligation and a Sunnah, and since the obligation is more important, it is obligatory to give it precedence.

Therefore, other than 'Ishā prayer, it is better to pray at the early time, but if someone said (referring to the other four prayers other than 'Ishā), "If I pray early I will have to pray alone, but if I delay then I can pray in congregation because there is a (maṣjid) congregation that prays late, so should I pray early (alone) or delay (to pray in congregation)?" We say, delay, because the congregation is obligatory, and praying at the early time is Sunnah, and there is no conflict between an obligation and a Sunnah.

Another exception (to praying at the early time) is Dhuhr prayer during times of extreme heat due to the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ): "If it is very hot, then pray the Dhuhr prayer when it becomes (a bit) cooler, as the severity of the heat is from the raging of the Hell-fire."¹

The scholars (then) differed, is delaying till a slightly cooler time a Sunnah or simply a permission that allows for it in [times of] need?

Some of them said it is a Sunnah. Based upon this, delaying (Dhuhr till its later time) for coolness is legislated in any case (whether the heat was actually a problem or not, as long as there is heat then delay should occur according to this opinion).

Others said it is a permission allowing it during times of need. Based upon this, if it were more suitable and appropriate for

¹ Bukhārī (536) and Muslim (615).

the people to not delay for coolness then so be it, (they can pray early as usual despite the heat).

Currently, the people typically take it as a permission allowing it during times of need, the people do not delay the Dhuhr, they do not delay for coolness. They pray Dhuhr at its beginning time in summer and winter, and that being based upon it being a permission allowing it in times of need, (and not a Sunnah that must occur whenever heat exists).

The point of delaying for coolness is clemency to the people, but people now say, clemency for us is to pray Dhuhr in its early time, because if we were to delay and the students come home from school and have lunch, they would then sleep and miss Dhuhr. Similarly, workers, if we delayed for coolness, they would come home from their work and have lunch then sleep and miss Dhuhr. Therefore, Dhuhr should be prayed early so they all pray it, then after that can be lunch and a nap till 'Aṣr for example.

If, however, delaying Dhuhr is wanted for coolness to arise, then the adhān is to be delayed, because it is established in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, “We were in the company of the Prophet on a journey and the Mu‘adhdhin wanted to pronounce the Adhān for the (Dhuhr) prayer. The Prophet said to him, ‘Let it become cooler.’ Then he again wanted to pronounce the Adhān but the Prophet said to him, ‘Let it become cooler.’ The Mu‘adhdhin again wanted to pronounce the Adhān for the prayer but the Prophet said, ‘Let it become cooler,’ till the

shadows of the hillocks become equal to their sizes. The Prophet added,

‘The severity of the heat is from the raging of Hell.’¹

This indicates that delaying for coolness is a significant delay, unlike what some people do. They delay the adhān by half an hour from original time, rather coolness does not occur till it is very close to ‘Aṣr time (i.e. close to the end of Dhuhhr time).

As for the ḥadīth,

“Pray the Fajr as the sunrise light appears, for it is greater for your reward.”²

This – if authenticated – is to highlight that you do not pray until the true dawn light appears and true Fajr becomes clear, so that you do not pray before the time. All those who described the prayer of the Prophet (ﷺ) mention that he used to pray Fajr during darkness, and by the time he would depart from the prayer a man could recognize the one sitting next to him. This indicates he prayed early, despite reciting 60 – 100 ayahs (verses), (hence the prayer would start at the early time in relative darkness still, but due to elongation of it, it would end at a time closer to sunrise, with a lot more visible light apparent and so they could recognize each other).

¹ Bukhārī (629).

² Abū Dāwūd (424), Tirmidhī (154), Nasāī (459), Ibn Mājah (672), and Aḥmad (4/142).

The correct position therefore, is that the Sunnah is to pray Fajr early, but verification of the rise of true dawn is a must.

These times that Allāh has prescribed the prayers within four of them are consecutive, there is no gap from one to the next, and there is one that is independent, nothing is connected to it before or after. Dhuhr, 'Aṣr, Maghrib and 'Ishā are all connected times. As for Fajr, it is isolated from 'Ishā and also from Dhuhr. Between it and 'Ishā is the last half of the night, and between it and Dhuhr is the first half of the day.

There is no obligatory prayer beginning with the halfway point of the night and onwards, but it is a time for the supergatory night prayer, just as the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

“The most beloved prayer to Allāh is the prayer of Dāwūd, he used to sleep half of the night, and then pray a third, and then sleep a sixth.”¹

Pay attention to this, because the majority of scholars in jurisprudence (Fuqahā) – may Allāh have mercy upon them – consider that the time for 'Ishā extends till the rise of true dawn, but it is a weak opinion and there is nothing in the Sunnah nor in the Qur'an that indicates that. The strongest opinion from the statements of the people of knowledge is that after half of the night the time for 'Ishā has ended, and the

¹ (Bukhārī (1131) and Muslim (1159)).

evidence is from the book of Allāh and the Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ).

In the Qur'ān, Allāh says:

﴿ أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذُلُوكِ الشَّمْسِ إِلَى غَسَقِ اللَّيْلِ ﴾

“Perform As-Ṣalāh (Iqamat Al-Ṣalāh) from mid-day till the darkness of the night (i.e. the Dhuhr, ‘Aṣr, Maghrib, and ‘Ishā' prayers).” (Al-Isrā: 78).

‘Dulūk’ of the sun is after mid-day, and the [letter] ‘lām’ is for timing, i.e. from the time of mid-day, as in the statement of Allāh:

﴿ فَطَلَّقُوهُنَّ لِعَدَّتِهِنَّ ﴾

“Divorce them at their ‘Iddah (prescribed periods).” (Ṭalāq: 1)

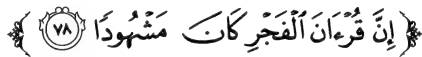
Referring to the time of their prescribed period, the time in which the woman has her prescribed periods. And it is phrased with a ‘lām’ ‘li-Dulūk’, and He did not say, ‘from’, because the times for the prayers are reasons for their obligations, and the ‘lām’ indicates reasoning. So it is as if He said, ‘establish the prayer because the sun has passed mid-day’ (i.e. time has begun).

“From mid-day till the darkness of the night.” The “ghasaq” is the utmost of darkness, and the utmost of darkness in the night

is at the half of the night, since the furthest the sun can be from the region you are in is at the middle of the night. So it is the darkest part of the night. This is known as the 'ghasaq' of the night.

So from the mid-day till the darkest part of the night (half of the night) Allāh has made as one overall time for the prayers - "Perform As-Ṣalāh (Iqamat Al-Ṣalāh) from mid-day till the darkness of the night (i.e. the Dhuhr, 'Aṣr, Maghrib, and 'Ishā' prayers)" (Al-Isrā: 78) - since they are consecutive times.

Then He said:



"Verily, the recitation of the Qur'ān in the early dawn is ever witnessed (attended by the angels in charge of mankind of the day and the night)." (Al-Isrā: 78).

The intent behind the recitation of the Qur'ān in the early dawn is the Fajr prayer. Allāh termed it as the "Qur'ān" because the recitation within it is elongated.

The important point to note is that Allāh separated Fajr from that which is before it, and that is why the Sunnah has clarified this completely as in the hadith of 'Abdullah b. 'Amr b. al-Āṣ (رضي الله عنه) where he mentioned the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said,

"The time for Dhuhr is when the sun passes the mid-day and the shadow of a man is equal to his length, as long as

'Aṣr does not enter – up until 'Aṣr time enters. The time for 'Aṣr is (ongoing) up until the sun becomes yellowy. The time for Maghrib prayer is up until the red twilight disappears. The time for 'Ishā prayer is up until half of the middle of the night. The time for Fajr prayer is from the rise of the true dawn up until sunrise, and when the sun rises, then hold back from the prayer because it rises between two horns of the Shayṭān.”¹

So if it said, there is also a gap between 'Aṣr and Maghrib, since he said, “up until the sun becomes yellowy,” then he said, “the time for Maghrib is up until the red twilight disappears,” so between the yellowing of the sun and actual sunset there is a gap; the answer is that this gap is actually from the allotted time of 'Aṣr. The evidence is the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ),

“Whomsoever catches one unit (rak'ah) of 'Aṣr before the sun sets, then he has caught 'Aṣr.”²

Therefore, 'Aṣr has two time allocations, a time of choice up until the sun yellows, and a time of necessity (from when it yellows) up until it sets.

The benefit of this specification is that if a person were capable of performing the obligatory prayer before the time goes, then the prayer is binding upon him. And if his capability is absent

¹ Muslim (612).

² Bukhārī (579) and Muslim (608).

from before the time enters and continues (upon inability) until the time exits then the prayer is not binding upon him.

An example of that; let's suppose a man is afflicted with illness, and thus he falls unconscious before the sun passes mid-day, and he does not regain consciousness till after sunset, then Dhuhr and 'Aṣr prayers are not upon him. His mind was in absence from before the time entered, and did not return to him till after the time exited, so there is no prayer upon him [to make up].

Another example, a woman becomes pure from her period after sunset, so there is no Dhuhr and 'Aṣr prayer for that day since the time had exited.

Another example, a woman's period begins before mid-day by a quarter of an hour, so it is not upon her to make up Dhuhr after she becomes pure (at the end of the period), since her capability to pray was absent from before the time had entered.

Another example, a woman becomes pure from her period after the middle of the night, so 'Ishā prayer would not be upon her, since the time has exited, and so on and so forth.

Thereafter, what is the wisdom in them having been prescribed at these particular times? You find between two prayers a long gap sometimes, and sometimes a small gap between two (other) prayers. So from Fajr to Dhuhr there is a long gap, from 'Ishā till Fajr there is a long gap, from Dhuhr

till 'Aṣr it is a medium length gap, and between Maghrib and 'Ishā is a short gap.

The answer is the wisdom is that – and Allāh knows best of its wisdom – they are connected to the clear physical changes of the skyline. So whilst the people are in pitch-black darkness, then suddenly the horizon lights up and prepares for the arrival of the sun. This change on the skyline is a great one, not something easy. Who is able to come with this light after the skyline was in pitch-black darkness? No one is able except Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic. Who from creation is able to come with the sun to enlighten the world? No one.

﴿قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمُ اللَّيْلَ سَرْمَدًا إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَمَةِ مَنْ إِلَهٌ غَيْرُ اللَّهِ
يَأْتِيَكُم بِضِيَاءٍ﴾

“Say (O Muḥammad (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ)): Tell me! If Allāh made night continuous for you till the Day of Resurrection, who is an ilāh (a god) besides Allāh who could bring you light? Will you not then hear?” (Al-Qaṣaṣ: 71)

There is no deity worthy of worship except Allāh. No one comes with the light except Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic.

﴿أَفَلَا تَسْمَعُونَ﴾

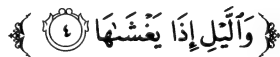
“Will you not then hear?” (Al-Qaṣaṣ: 71)

Therefore, this is a sign from the signs of Allāh, so due to that the Fajr prayer has been established (at that time). Then the prayer is suspended during sunrise (morning) so that this may be a free time for the people to seek their sustenance.

Dhuhr prayer is then held at post-meridiem, and that is the deflection of the sun from the East to the West on the horizon; this transfer of the sun from the eastern side to the western side is from the signs of Allāh, and this is a change. So initially the shadow was decreasing, then suddenly it begins to increase after mid-day. So who is able to move this great sun from the east of the sky to the west? No one is able to move this sun from the East to the West of the sky except its Creator, the Mighty and Majestic, Lord of all creation, the one who says "Be" to a matter and it is. Therefore, we say, these are from the signs of Allāh, hence they are a reason for the (Dhuhr) prayer.

As for 'Aṣr, I am not aware of a wisdom, the knowledge is with Allāh.

As for Maghrib, after the sunset the environment changes, and how great the Earth is if you viewed it whilst in a plane and the sun has disappeared from the Earth. By Allāh, you would know the wisdom in the statement of Allāh:



"And by the night as it conceals it (the sun)." (Al-Shams:

4)

I once departed from Qaṣīm airport before sunset by a few minutes and the plane took off, and the sun disappeared from the people of the Earth, but we could still see it from the sky, but the night had enveloped the Earth (below) – glory be to Allāh free from imperfection – as if it is a black garment the Earth has been covered with. With this the greatness of the statement of Allāh becomes clear,

“And by the night as it conceals it (the sun).” (Al-Shams: 4)

At the moment of this great change, Allāh obligated a prayer upon us, and that is Maghrib prayer.

Similarly, ‘Ishā, when the red twilight disappears, a change in the environment occurs, because the twilight is an indicator upon the closeness of the sun’s rays since the twilight is the remnant of sunrays, so if they become concealed it indicates its distance (that it has become distant).

So through this we understand the wisdom of Allāh in obligating the prayer at these times. In addition, from the blessing of Allāh is that these prayers are distributed over different times that Allāh the Mighty and Majestic chose as their times, and they are not all in one time together. So Fajr has its time, Dhuhr has its time, ‘Aṣr has its time, Maghrib has its time, and ‘Ishā has its time; so why were they distributed over these times?

The answer – for two benefits:

1 – The First Benefit: Weariness and tedium does not occur to the person, since if they were all combined into one time a person may be overcome with difficulty sometimes. If a person prayed 17 units (Rak'ah) all at one time, he may become tired and weary and pray them in a manner not accurate. Sometimes it may be burdensome, hence they have been split into five times.

So if it said, "What do you say about Tarāwīh prayer in Ramadan?" We say, Tarāwīh prayer is a Sunnah, if a person wishes he could leave it. For example, if he became tired he is free to leave and rest. If, however, it is an obligatory prayer then he is compelled to complete it upon the prescribed manner it has been mentioned (in the Sunnah), so this is a difference between the two. That is why a person in his night prayer can lengthen his Rukū' (bowing) and Sujūd (prostrating) and recitation, because it is a supererogatory prayer; whenever he wants he can stop and go to his place of rest, (take a break, or finish up whenever he pleases).

2 – The Second Benefit: If the prayers were all combined into one time a person would be left the rest of the day and night without worshipping his Lord with obligatory prayer. This results in a suspension between the servant and his Lord in the obligatory prayer. Hence, the benefit is not achieved, since it brings life to the heart and closeness to Allāh. Therefore, it has been distributed over the various times Allāh chose, so that this distribution is like the watering of a tree (it

regularly receives nutrition throughout the day). So whenever a person becomes negligent, he returns to the remembrance of Allāh (since every so often throughout the day and night there is an upcoming prayer to remind him).

This is why Allāh said:

﴿وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذِكْرِي﴾

“And perform As-Ṣalāh (Iqamat-as-Ṣalāh) for My Remembrance.” (Ṭaha: 14).

Hence the prayer is remembrance of Allāh.

It is not permissible to pray a prayer before its time even if he was forgetful or ignorant (of the actual time), and it is upon him to repeat the prayer, just like someone who slaughters before the ‘Eid prayer; that slaughtering does not count for him, even if he was ignorant (i.e. did not realize the time had not started yet). That is why the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) commanded those who had slaughtered on ‘Eid Adhā before the prayer to repeat the slaughtering¹, since it had occurred before its time. It is therefore gathered from this that if a worship that is prescribed with allotted times is done before its time, it must be repeated (once the allotted time begins).

[Example] If a man thought the sun had set due to cloudiness or fog, so he prayed Maghrib, but then the sun appears (from

¹ Bukhārī (954, 968 & 985) and Muslim (1961),

behind the clouds) and it becomes clear that it has not set, then his prayer is incorrect because it is not in the time.

[Example] If a man awoke at night and saw the clock and thought Fajr time had entered so he prayed Fajr prayer, but then he realized Fajr had not entered, then his prayer is not correct, and it will not count as his obligatory Fajr. It is upon him to pray again.

He will however, be rewarded for the initial prayer, because although it is not correct as an obligatory prayer, it is correct as a supererogatory prayer. Therefore, the one who prayed intended two things: he intended (in the general sense) to pray, and he intended it as an obligatory prayer, so it is invalid as an obligatory [prayer]. However, it is valid as simply a “prayer” and he is rewarded the reward in accordance to it being supererogatory.

Due to this the scholars have a phrase, they say: “It alters into a supererogatory if the absence of (obligatory) becomes apparent,” meaning it alters into a supererogatory if the obligatory aspect becomes absent and void, like a prayer he prays before its time. So it becomes supererogatory, and he is rewarded the reward of a supererogatory prayer, but it will not count as his obligatory.

[Example] If a man purposely prayed before the time, then his prayer is not acceptable with [the occurrence of] a sin in addition to this. As for the one (in the previous examples) who

forgot or was unaware, then his prayer is not acceptable (as obligatory), but there is no sin.

[Example] If a man purposely delayed the prayer beyond its time without reason and then he prayed it out of its time – such as someone who prays Fajr after sunrise purposely because he says he will not get up until it is time for work, and when his time for work approaches he wakes up and gets ready, then prays (and goes to work) – indeed the prayer as such will not be accepted from him even if he prays it one thousand times. The evidence for that is the statement of Allāh:

﴿إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَوْقُوتًا﴾ (١٠٣)

“Verily, the prayer is enjoined on the believers at fixed hours.” (Al-Nisā: 103)

In other words, it is allocated by time, so if someone delays it beyond the time purposely, then he is a wrongdoer and transgressor due to the statement of Allāh:

﴿وَمَنْ يَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ اللَّهِ فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ نَفْسَهُ﴾

“And whosoever transgresses the set limits of Allāh, then indeed he has wronged himself.” (Ṭalāq: 1)

﴿وَمَنْ يَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ اللَّهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ﴾ (٢٢٩)

“And whoever transgresses the limits ordained by Allāh, then such are the wrong-doers.” (Baqarah: 229).

And it is not accepted from the wrongdoer and transgressor, because Allāh is 'Ṭayyib' and only accepts the good¹. If he delays the prayer out of its time purposely without reason and prays it after the time, then he has performed it in a manner that does not conform to the command of Allāh and His Messenger (ﷺ). And it has been authenticated from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said,

“Whomsoever performs an action that is not in accordance to this affair of ours, then it will be rejected”,
i.e. rejected from him².

So if someone were to say, if a person delayed the prayer beyond its time purposely, then what is he to do now? We say, he repents to Allāh, and rectifies his actions, and making it up is not upon him. The evidence is what we have mentioned just now from the verse and hadeeth, and we only say that he does not have to make it up since by making it up it would not benefit him in this circumstance, so it is an action he does not benefit from.

As for a person delaying it out of forgetfulness, or sleep, or not realizing the time – for example, due to cloud cover, and as a result he does not know the time because he has no watch – then these types pray whenever such reasoning is removed due to the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ),

¹ Muslim (1015).

² Bukhārī (2697) and Muslim (1718).

“If any of you sleeps through the prayer, or forgets it, then he is to pray when he remembers. Indeed, Allāh says, “Establish prayer for My (i.e. Allāh's) remembrance.” (Ṭaha: 14)”¹.

[Example] A man sleeps and places the alarm next to his head; however, he was in deep sleep, and the alarm went off but he was not alerted by it, and he did not wake up till after sunrise, so he prayed after sunrise. His prayer is correct due to evidences from the Sunnah – the verbal sayings and actions (of the Prophet):

As for the verbal statements, then indeed the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

“If any of you sleeps through the prayer, or forgets it, then he is to pray when he remembers.”²

As for the actions of the Prophet (ﷺ), then Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) narrated,

“When the Prophet (ﷺ) was returning from the battle of Khaybar, he travelled all night until sleep overcame him and he rested, and he said to Bilal, ‘Watch the night or us (awaken us for Fajr).’ So Bilal prayed what was decreed for him, and the Prophet (ﷺ) and his companions slept. When Fajr came close Bilal rested leaning on his riding animal, facing the Fajr

¹ Bukhārī (597) and Muslim (684).

² Bukhārī (597) and Muslim (684).

(impending arrival of it). Sleep overcame Bilal whilst he was leaning back on his riding animal, so the Prophet (ﷺ) did not awaken, nor Bilal nor anyone from his companions until the sun beat on their faces. The Prophet (ﷺ) was the first of them to awaken, and he was taken aback, and he said, 'O Bilal', so Bilal said, 'The same overtook me – may my father and mother be ransomed for you – as overtook you.' So he said to them, 'Move along', so they moved along with their riding animals somewhat. Then the Messenger (ﷺ) made ablution and ordered Bilal to establish the prayer (make the call for its beginning), so he led them in Fajr."¹ Thus, he was asleep, and the one asleep is excused.

A question: A man is ambushed by bandits on his route who take his clothes and so he is left naked, no clothes upon him. It is possible for him to reach the village (but) only after the time has exited, so do you say to him, 'Wait till you get to the village and cover yourself with a garment (to pray in)', or do you say to him, 'Pray now naked'?

We say, pray now (even whilst) naked, because the allotted time is the most emphasized condition of the prayer.

[Example] A person doesn't have any water (to make Wudū – ablution), but he knows he can get to water but only after the time exits. Do we say, delay the prayer until the time exits

¹ Muslim (680).

(in order to be able to get to the water for Wuḍū [ablution]), or just make tayammum (substitute to ablution using earth)?

The answer: We say make tayammum, because the time is the most emphasized condition of the prayer.

And if he made tayammum and then found water afterwards then there is nothing upon him, the Sunnah is that he does not then repeat the prayer. It is reported from Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī (رضي الله عنه) who said,

“Two men exited upon a journey, and the time of prayer entered upon them, and they had no water, so they made tayammum with clean earth and prayed. Then they came across water afterwards and the time (of the prayer) was still present, so one of them repeated the prayer with (full) Wuḍū, and the other one did not repeat. Then they came to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and mentioned that to him, so he (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said to the one who did not repeat, ‘You achieved the Sunnah and your prayer counts for you’, and he said to the one who made Wuḍū and repeated (upon finding water), ‘You have the reward twice.’”¹

¹ Abū Dāwūd (338) and Nasāʾī (433).

The Second Condition: Purification from Minor and Major Impurity

The minor impurity is what necessitates Wudū (ablution), and major impurity is what necessitates ghusl, due to the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ),

“A prayer is not accepted without purification.”¹

And there is no difference between supererogatory and obligatory prayer, neither between a prayer that has bowing and prostration and a prayer that does not have bowing and prostration, like Janāzah prayer (prayer upon the deceased).

¹ Muslim (224).

The Third Condition: Avoidance of Impurity

There must not be any impurity on your garment, nor on your body, nor on the ground which you will pray upon. Hence, avoiding impurity is required in three affairs:

1. The body
2. The clothing
3. The area of ground

The evidence is that a small boy was brought to the Prophet (ﷺ), meaning a baby not yet eating solids, he was still drinking milk only. He urinated on his garment, so he called for water and followed up on the traces (cleaned the areas with water where urine fell).¹

This can be utilized as the evidence that the garment must be pure.

Another evidence, Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (رضي الله عنه) narrated,

“Whilst the Prophet (ﷺ) was leading the prayer with his companions he removed his shoes and placed them to his left, so when the companions saw that they cast off their shoes. When the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) finished the prayer he said, ‘What caused you to take off your shoes?’ They said, ‘We saw you take off your shoes, so we took off our shoes.’ The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, ‘Indeed Jibrīl (عليه السلام) came and

¹ Bukhārī (223) and Muslim (287).

informed me that there was impurity in them, so when one of you comes to the mosque then let him look, if he sees impurity in his shoes then he should wipe it off then pray in them.”¹

This indicates it is impermissible for a person to continue wearing an impure garment during the prayer.

And the evidence upon the requirement of pure location to pray on is the statement of Allāh, the Most High:

﴿وَطَهِّرْ بَيْتِيَ لِلطَّائِفِينَ وَالْقَائِمِينَ وَالرُّكَّعِ السُّجُودِ﴾

“And sanctify My House for those who circumambulate it, and those who stand up for prayer, and those who bow (submit themselves with humility and obedience to Allāh), and make prostration (in prayer, etc.).” (al-Ḥajj: 26)

Similarly, the Prophet (ﷺ) ordered for a bucket of water to be poured over the urine of the Bedouin, for it is narrated from Anas bin Mālik who said,

“Whilst we were with the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) in the mosque, a Bedouin came and stood urinating in the mosque, so the companions of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, ‘Stop, stop!’ The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, ‘Do not berate him, leave him,’ so they

¹ Abū Dāwūd (650) and Aḥmad (3/92).

left him until he finished urinating. Then the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) called him and said, 'Indeed, these mosques are not an appropriate place for urine nor impurity; rather they are for the remembrance of Allāh, prayer and recitation of the Qur'ān.'" Or as the Prophet (ﷺ) said [i.e. this is the meaning of the ḥadīth]. "Then he commanded a man from among them and he came with a bucket and poured it over it."¹

Hence, the command of the Prophet (ﷺ) for water to be poured over the urine, which was in the mosque, indicates the obligation of purifying the place of prayer.

An Issue: If an individual nullified his Wuḍū (breaking wind, urinating, etc.) and he ended up praying forgetfully in that state of non-Wuḍū, we would necessitate upon him Wuḍū and repetition of the prayer. We say, make Wuḍū and pray. However, if a person had upon him impurity and he forgot and prayed before washing it off, repeating the prayer is not necessitated.

So if someone says, "What's the difference?" The answer is: The scholars said, as for [that which is found in] the Sunnah, then [there is] the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ),

"Allāh does not accept the prayer of one of you performs ḥadath (passes wind, urine or stool) until he makes Wuḍū."²

¹ Bukhārī (219 & 220) and Muslim (285).

² Bukhārī (135) and Muslim (225).

He did not detail and say, “except if he is forgetful”, so we take the generality, (i.e. in all cases without purification, whether forgetful or not, the prayer is unacceptable).

As for the issue of impurity, that is because when the Prophet (ﷺ) became aware that there is impurity in his shoes, he didn't start the prayer from the beginning again (he just took the shoes off and continued). If the prayer were nullified, then he would have started from the beginning again; this is evidence from the Sunnah.

A logical evidence: leaving Wuḍū is leaving a command, and as for prayer with impurity present then that is a prohibition, and performing a prohibition is excused if it is forgetfully done, or through ignorance or compulsion; however, leaving the performance of a command is not excused, except that there is no sin upon him (if he left it accidentally).

Due to this, the one who performs a forbidden act whilst in the state of ihram forgetfully, or ignorantly, or under compulsion, then there is nothing upon him. Similarly, the one who eats whilst fasting forgetfully, or ignorantly, or under compulsion then there is nothing upon him.

Praying without Wuḍū forgetfully incurs no sin due to the statement of Allāh:

﴿رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَا إِن سَيِّئًا أَوْ آخِطَانَا﴾

“Our Lord! Punish us not if we forget or fall into error.”

(Baqarah: 286)

However, it is a prayer that is not correct, so it does not count, so he is still required to pray (upon Wuḍū correctly).

The prayer is therefore preceded by purification of the heart and body; purification of the body from the minor impurity is through Wuḍū, and from major impurity through ritual full bathing (ghusl). Purification of the body from impurities, as well as purification of the clothing and location indicates the greatness of the prayer.

The purification of the body in the statement of Allāh, the Most High, when He mentioned the verse regarding Wuḍū, ritual full bathing (ghusl), and tayammum (non-water alternative to Wuḍū in the absence of water or inability to acquire or use water):

﴿ مَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيَجْعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ حَرَجٍ وَلَٰكِنْ يُرِيدُ لِيُطَهِّرَكُمْ

وَلِيُتِمَّ نِعْمَتَهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴾

“Allāh does not want to place you in difficulty, but He wants to purify you, and to complete His Favor on you that you may be thankful.” (Al-Mā'idah: 6)

The Prophet (ﷺ) said regarding the purification of the heart, or non-physical abstract purification that precedes the prayer, “None from among you makes Wuḍū and perfects it,

then says, I bear testification that none has the right to be worshipped in truth except Allāh, and that Muḥammad is the servant and messenger of Allāh, except that the eight doors of Paradise are opened for him, he may enter from any one he pleases.”¹ This purification with the two great testifications is purification of the heart.

¹ Muslim (234).

The Fourth Condition: Covering the 'Awrah.

[The proof is] the statement of Allāh:

﴿يَبْنَىءَ آدَمَ خُذُوا زِينَتَكُمْ عِنْدَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِينَ﴾

﴿لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِينَ﴾ (٣١)

“O Children of Adam! Take your adornment (by wearing your clean clothes), while praying and going round (the Ṭawāf of) the Ka'bah, and eat and drink but waste not by extravagance.” (Al-A'rāf: 31)

And the Prophet (ﷺ) said to Jābir b. 'Abdullah (رضي الله عنه) regarding the clothing, “If the garment is large enough wrap it around the body (covering the shoulders), and if it is tight (too short) then use it as an *Izār* (tie it around your waist only).”¹

And he said in that which Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) narrated, “None of you should pray in a single garment that does not cover one's shoulder.”²

This indicates that a person must be covered whilst praying, and Ibn 'Abd-Barr (رحمته الله) reported a consensus of the scholars upon that, and that the one who prays naked with the ability to cover, then his prayer is not correct.

¹ Bukhārī (361).

² Bukhārī (359) and Muslim (516).

In this regard, the scholars – may Allāh have mercy upon them – split the 'Awrah into three types:

1. Minor
2. Medium
3. Major

The major level of 'Awrah is that of a free adult woman. They said all of her body is 'Awrah during prayer, except her face, and they differed over the hands and feet.

However, if there were non-mahārim men (strangers) around her, then it is obligatory upon her to cover her face even in prayer, because it is not permissible for a woman to uncover her face in front of strange non-mahram men.

The minor level of 'Awrah is that of a male from age 7 to 10. His 'Awrah is the two private parts – front and back area – so it is not an obligation for him to cover his thighs because he is young.

The medium level of 'Awrah is everything besides the previous two. They said the obligation in it is to cover what is between the naval and knee, so an adult man from age 10 upwards enters into this. Similarly, a female who is not adult yet (not yet reached puberty), and a slave woman enters into that.

Despite this we say the legislative right upon every individual is to adorn himself (dress accordingly and appropriately) for every prayer, and to wear the full clothing. However, suppose

there was a tear in his clothing in the area over his 'Awrah then it is debated- is his prayer correct or not? Since a difference is made between a minor tear or hole and a major one. Similarly, a difference is made over whether the tear or hole is in an area of major 'Awrah - such as directly upon the private regions of the front or back - or whether it is to the side of that area, such as at the side of the thigh, or on the back above the buttocks, or on the stomach area below the naval but above the private parts. The point is that every region has its level of intensity in 'Awrah.

Perhaps this question also pulls us into making (everyone) aware of another affair that some people do during the summer days when they wear short pants, and a see-through light garment (thawb) over the top, which the skin can be seen through, and they pray. The one who does this, his prayer is not correct. Short pants do not cover everything between the naval and knee, and if a person wore them with a see-through garment (thawb) over the top whereby skin could be seen through it, then the person has not covered his 'Awrah area that is obligated upon him to cover during the prayer, (since the area between his naval and private region as well his lower thighs would all be visible through the see-through light upper garment).

The meaning of our statement "see-through that shows the skin", is that the skin color is apparent through the garment, whether it is red (white complexion), black, or between that.

And the meaning is not that the size of the body is apparent, that does not have any effect, even though the thicker the garment the better, but that doesn't harm because it is not see-through [in a way] that shows the skin through it.

For example, there are some clothes that if pants are worn under them, the point of the pants ending and skin starting are vaguely apparent; however, the skin color cannot be determined, so prayer in such garments is correct, however, the thicker the garments the better.

The Fifth Condition: Facing the Direction of the Qiblah.

Due to the statement of Allāh the Most High:

﴿وَمِنْ حَيْثُ خَرَجْتَ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ فَوَلُّوا

﴿وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُ﴾

“And from wheresoever you start forth (for prayers), turn your face in the direction of Al-Masjid-al-Haram (at Makkah), and wheresoever you are, turn your faces towards, it (when you pray)”, (Baqarah: 150)

However, the scholars say whomsoever is able to see the actual Ka'bah then he must face the actual Ka'bah directly, ergo the authorities at Masjid al-Harām placed small blue lines on the marble floor so that the person knows which way to face the Ka'bah. It is important to be aware of this, because you see

some people praying now who do not directly face the Ka'bah (whilst in its vicinity in Masjid al-Ḥarām); hence it is important to be aware of this.

As for the one who cannot see the Ka'bah then upon him is to face the direction. Some of the scholars said - to illustrate this - whomsoever is in the actual Masjid (Masjid al-Ḥarām) he must face the Ka'bah, and whomsoever is in Makkah he must face Masjid al-Ḥarām, and whomsoever is outside of Makkah he must face Makkah, but this is generally to just illustrate the point.

And the people of knowledge - may Allāh have mercy upon them - mentioned that a small deviation from the direction does not affect anything. So if a person was East or West of the Ka'bah (his country being to the East or West) then the Qiblah direction as far as he is concerned is between the North and South, and if a person was to the North or South of the Ka'bah then the Qiblah direction is between the East and West for him, since the obligation is facing the direction.

If we suppose a man was to the East of the Ka'bah and he faced the North then that is not correct, because he has made the direction to his left (the Ka'bah will be to the left of where is he facing), and similarly if he were facing the South that would not be correct, since he has made the Qiblah to his right. Similarly, if he was from the people of the North and he faced the West then his prayer is not correct, because he has made

the Qiblah to his left, and if he faced the East then that will not be correct since he has made the Qiblah to his right.

So whomsoever prays to other than the direction of the Qiblah then his prayer is invalid and incorrect, and it does not count for him except in four circumstances:

1 – First Circumstance: If he is unable to face the Qiblah. For example, he is ill and his face is in a direction not facing the Qiblah, and he is unable to move or rotate himself to the Qiblah direction because of his ailment, then his prayer is correct upon whatever direction (he may be facing), due to the statement of Allāh the Most High,

﴿فَأَنفِقُوا لِلَّهِ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ﴾

“So keep your duty to Allāh and fear Him as much as you can” (Al-Taghābun: 16)

So this man (in such a situation) is unable to move to the direction of the Qiblah, neither by himself, nor by aid of anyone else.

2 – Second Circumstance: If he is afraid of the enemy, or he is fleeing and his direction is other than to the Qiblah, so in this circumstance facing the Qiblah is dropped due to the statement of Allāh the Most High,

﴿فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ فَرِجَالًا أَوْ رُكْبَانًا﴾

“And if you fear (an enemy), perform Ṣalāh (pray) on foot or riding.” (Baqarah: 239)

And it is known that the fearful one (in his state) may be heading towards the direction of the Qiblah or it could be in other than it, and so if Allāh has permitted him to pray on foot or riding, that necessitates within it the permission to pray in a direction other than the Qiblah if he fears for himself in turning toward the Qiblah.

3 – Third Circumstance: If he is travelling and he wanted to pray supererogatory, then he can pray in whatever direction he is heading. That is authenticated from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he used to pray whilst travelling in whatever direction his face was – except that he did not pray the obligatory prayers (in this way, facing any direction). It is reported from ‘Āmir b. Rabī‘ah that he said,

“I saw the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) whilst he was on his riding animal praying, he would indicate with his head toward whatever direction he headed toward, and the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) did not used to do that in the obligatory prayers.”¹

So in the supererogatory a person can pray wherever his face is facing, unlike the obligatory prayers, for indeed in the

¹ Bukhārī (1098) and Muslim (700).

obligatory prayer he must face the Qiblah even when travelling.

4 – Fourth Circumstance: If the Qiblah direction is doubtful or confused, so he doesn't know which direction it is in, then in this situation he strives to the best of his ability, and he faces the direction that he overwhelmingly believes to be the Qiblah direction. There is no obligation of repeating the prayer thereafter if it becomes clear to him afterwards he had prayed in the wrong direction.

The Sixth Condition: The Intention

The intention is a condition for the correctness of the prayer, and any person who makes Wuḍū and comes to the masjid and prays, cannot be doing so except that he has made the intention, since the intention does not require anything physical, and doesn't require thought, or scrutiny to remember.

The condition of intention is only mentioned for the purpose of specification, as for in its absolute open sense, then it is not possible for an intellectual individual to arise and make Wuḍū, then go and pray, it is not possible for him to do that if he had not intended in his mind to pray, (meaning in his mind he has intended to pray, hence he arises, makes Wuḍū, goes to the masjid etc. It cannot be that he does all that and it has never occurred to him that he wants to pray).

However a point remains, is it a condition to specify the prayer [with one's intention]? Meaning, if I came to pray Dhuhr, then is it a condition that I must make the intention specifically for Dhuhr, or is this not a condition?

The answer: The scholars of the Muslims have differed over that, so some of them said specification (of the particular prayer) is a must, so if you came in a rush and the Imam was already praying, and you joined in and did not mentally recall your intention that it is such and such a prayer, then there is no prayer for you (it does not count) due to not specifying

your intention. Hence they say you must intend the prayer, and that it is Dhuhr, or intend the prayer and that it is 'Aṣr, or intend the prayer and that it is Maghrib, or intend the prayer and that it is 'Ishā, or intend the prayer and that it is Fajr. So intention to just “pray” alone does not suffice. Therefore, it is a condition that alongside the intention to pray specification of the particular prayer is required, so if he does not specify, then the prayer it is not correct.

However, some of the people of knowledge say specification is not a condition. It is sufficient for a person to intend that this is the obligatory prayer of the time, (at Dhuhr for example, in early afternoon he approaches the masjid and recognizes in his mind that it is time for the obligatory prayer so he prays with that general intention to pray the obligatory prayer of this time. It is not a condition that he states in his mind “I intend to pray the Dhuhr prayer” specifically). In this way there is leeway for people. They say, if you intended the prayer for example, and you came to Dhuhr prayer, then there is no need for specification of intention, rather just intend that you want to pray the obligation of this time. If you come to Maghrib prayer, intend that you have come to perform the obligation of this time. This opinion is easier and with more leeway than the first opinion, hence we give the ruling upon this opinion and say: Whomsoever intends an obligatory prayer of the time, it counts for him even if he does not specify the prayer exactly, the time is sufficient. (In other words, a person comes at Dhuhr time with intent of praying the obligatory prayer, he is not

required to have to mentally specify “it is Dhuhr” in his intention; that is recognized in his mind by default due to the time of day he is approaching the masjid.)

An Issue: It is not permissible for a person to change from a supererogatory (nafl) to an obligatory (farḍ) intention (within prayer).

Meaning, a person enters the masjid, or is in his house, and he starts praying and makes the opening *Takbīr* “*Allāhu Akbar*” with intention of supererogatory prayer, then during the prayer he says to himself, “I’m late, I will make this my obligatory prayer.” His changeover from supererogatory to obligatory is not correct. If we were to say it is correct, then that would mean the beginning of the prayer was supererogatory and the end of the prayer was obligatory, and the obligatory prayer must be upon intention of obligatory prayer from the beginning to the end throughout.

An Issue: It is not permissible to change from an obligatory prayer to a specified supererogatory prayer.

For example, he makes the opening *Takbīr* “*Allāhu Akbar*” upon intention of obligatory Dhuhr prayer, then it occurs to him to make it the Sunnah of Dhuhr instead (perhaps he realizes he has plenty of time, or remembers he didn’t pray it yet). This is not permissible, since the intention for a specified *rātibah* prayer (Sunnah prayers attached to the obligatory ones), must be from the beginning of the prayer. If we were

to say it is permissible to change from the Dhuhr obligatory to the specific supererogatory, then the beginning would be obligatory and the end would be a specified supererogatory.

An Issue: If he changes from an obligatory prayer to a non-specific supererogatory, then that is permissible.

For example, he begins Dhuhr prayer then it occurs to him to make it a general supererogatory prayer without specification, then that is permissible. Since the intention for Dhuhr comprises of two parts - an intention to just “pray”, and an intention that it is Dhuhr - if he eliminates the intention of Dhuhr obligation, the general intention of just “praying” a prayer remains.

Likewise, that which also enters into the intention is the (changeover of) intention from praying alone to being the Imam, or the changeover of the intention of praying alone to being in a congregation. There is a difference between the scholars in this but the correct opinion is that it is not an issue (it is permissible).

So the intention to be the Imam from initially being alone such as if a person starts praying and he is alone, then another man comes and joins in with him so they become a congregation (hence the first individual now ends up the Imam), there is no problem in that. This is because the Prophet (ﷺ) stood to pray in the night, and Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) was asleep, then he awoke and made ablution, and entered with the Prophet

(صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) in the prayer, and the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) affirmed his action.¹ The origin is that what has been established in supererogatory also applies to obligatory unless there is evidence (to say otherwise).

So if a person started praying by himself, then someone came and joined him, so he made the first person become the Imam, there is no problem; the first one becomes the Imam and the second one becomes the one being led by the Imam.

Similarly, the opposite [is also valid]. If someone started the prayer alone, then a congregation came and prayed in congregation, so he (the initial one praying alone) joins them and so changes from being alone to being led in congregation, this also is no problem. The change here is not a nullification of the original intention, rather it is a change from type to type, (prayer alone to prayer in congregation), so there is no issue in it.

An Issue: A person praying an obligatory prayer can be led by someone praying a supererogatory prayer.

This occurred in the time of the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), for indeed Mu'adh b. Jabal (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) used to pray 'Ishā with the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) then he would return to his people and lead them in the same prayer ('Ishā), so it would be supererogatory for him and obligatory for them.

¹ Bukhārī (138) and Muslim (763).

If someone were to say: The Prophet (ﷺ) did not know he was doing that? (Hence this is not a proof) then we say this claim has no proof to it, because it is far-fetched that the Prophet (ﷺ) did not know that, especially since there is a story that occurred regarding this affair. Mu'ādh used to pray with the Prophet (ﷺ) and then go to lead his people in prayer. Once he led the people in prayer and recited Surah al-Baqarah. A man left (the row of people praying) and prayed a light (shorter) prayer (separately and then left). When Mu'ādh came to know about it, he said, "He (that man) is a hypocrite." Later, that man heard what Mu'ādh said about him, so he came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and said,

"O Allāh's Messenger! We are people who work with our own hands and irrigate (our farms) with our camels. Last night Mu'ādh led us in the prayer and he recited Surah al-Baqarah, so I offered my prayer separately, and because of that, he accused me of being a hypocrite." The Prophet (ﷺ) called Mu'ādh and said thrice, "O Mu'ādh! You are putting the people to trials?"¹

So this indicates that the Prophet (ﷺ) was aware of that.

If we were to – for the sake of argument – accept that the Prophet (ﷺ) did not know, then indeed Allāh the Most High knew, and Allāh does not affirm anyone during the time

¹ Bukhārī (6106) and Muslim (465).

of the Prophet (ﷺ) upon error, (rather revelation would come correcting the affair).

Hence, when the hypocrites were plotting by night in words that He does not approve of and the people did not know about them, Allāh made it apparent:

﴿يَسْتَخْفُونَ مِنَ النَّاسِ وَلَا يَسْتَحْفُونَ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَهُوَ مَعَهُمْ إِذْ يُبَيِّتُونَ مَا لَا

يَرْضَىٰ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطًا ۝١٠٨﴾

“They may hide (their crimes) from men, but they cannot hide (them) from Allāh, for He is with them (by His Knowledge), when they plot by night in words that He does not approve, And Allāh ever encompasses what they do.” (Al-Nisā: 108)

Due to this, the companions – may Allāh be pleased with them – would use the acknowledgment of Allāh as evidence upon the permissibility of affairs, just like in the Hadith of Jābir,

“We used to practice coitus interruptus during the lifetime of Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) while the Qur’ān was being revealed.”¹

The permissibility of practicing coitus interruptus was taken from the fact that it was occurring during the time the Qur’ān

¹ Bukhārī (5209) and Muslim (1440).

was still descending, and if there were anything to be forbidden the Qur'ān would have forbidden it.

Chapter 8

**Description of the Prayer in Light of What is
Mentioned from the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ)**

It is binding upon us to know that from the condition of worship is sincerity and following the Messenger (ﷺ), therefore we must understand how the Prophet (ﷺ) used to pray.

That is because Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic commanded us to establish the prayer, so He the Most High said:

﴿وَأَقِمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَارْكَعُوا مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ﴾ (٤٣)

“And perform Al-Ṣalāh (Iqamat-as-Ṣalāh), and give Zakat, and bow down (or submit yourselves with obedience to Allāh) along with those who bow.” (Al-Baqarah: 43)

And establishment of the prayer is that a person performs it in an upright sound manner in accordance to what the legislation came with, and that is by making it sincere to Allāh the Mighty and Majestic, and following the Prophet (ﷺ), and the Prophet (ﷺ) said, “Pray as you have seen me pray.” (Bukhārī 631)

So he commanded us to pray as we saw him pray, this was addressing the companions, and the Prophet (ﷺ)

addressing the companions is an address to them and the Ummah [nation] all the way till Judgment Day.

It is reported from Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه),

“A man entered the mosque while the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was sitting in one side of the mosque. The man offered prayer, came and greeted the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم). Allāh's Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said to him, ‘Wa ‘Alayka Salam (returned the greeting). Go back and pray, as you have not prayed (properly).’ The man returned, repeated his prayer, came back and greeted the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم). The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, ‘Wa ‘Alayka Salam (returned the greeting). Go back and pray again as you have not prayed (properly).’ The man said at the second or third time, ‘O Allāh's Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم)! Kindly teach me how to offer prayer (properly).’ The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, ‘When you stand for prayer, perform ablution properly and then face the Qiblah and then say Takbīr (Allāhu Akbar) ...’”¹

The Prophet's (صلى الله عليه وسلم) negation of the man's prayer is a legislative negation, and not a negation of facts, since the man did pray; however, he did not pray legislatively (in accordance to prescribed manner in the Sunnah) due to lack of tranquility in his prayer, so he repeated that three times. The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) kept returning him to get to this point, the point of

¹ Bukhārī (6251).

causing him to desire the knowledge, so that when knowledge is given to him, he is in the greatest of desire to know and therefore it will be solidified in him (when he does eventually hear it).

It is therefore appropriate for a person to strive upon implementing what has been mentioned from the Prophet (ﷺ) regarding the description of the prayer so that the person is conforming to his statement, "Pray as you have seen me pray."

The description of the prayer has come in the Qur'ān generally, and it was not explained in detail; however, the Sunnah explained that in complete detail, and the clarification of the Sunnah is considered as clarification of the Qur'ān, due to the statement of Allāh the Most High:

﴿وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الذِّكْرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ﴾ (١١)

"And We have also sent down unto you (O Muḥammad) the reminder and the advice (the Qur'ān), that you may explain clearly to men what is sent down to them, and that they may give thought." (Al-Naḥl: 44)

So the Sunnah clarified how to perform the prayer, and we will mention it – if Allāh wills – to the level possible in accordance to what we have come to know from the Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ).

We say, and with Allāh is all success:

The man leaves from his house pure from minor and major impurity, and from impurity in his body and clothes, with serenity and calmness intending the prayer. The Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) even commanded us to not hasten if we hear the Iqāmah for the prayer, “When you hear the Iqāmah (call to imminent beginning of prayer) proceed to offer the prayer with calmness and solemnity and do not rush...”¹

(Do not rush) because you are heading to Allāh, and serenity is in the heart, and calmness in the physical movements and form. The Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said, “What you catch then pray it, and what you miss make it up”.

The steps are considered for their reward, for indeed, “each step he takes toward the mosque, Allāh upgrades him a degree in reward and crosses out (forgives) one sin (at each step).”²

Then he enters the masjid with his right leg first saying,

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي ذُنُوبِي وَافْتَحْ لِي
أَبْوَابَ رَحْمَتِكَ

*Bismillāh Was Salām ‘Ala Rasulillāh Allāhumma Ighfirli
Dhunūbi Waftah Lī Abwāb Rahmātik.*

¹ Bukhārī (636) and Muslim (602).

² Bukhārī (477) and Muslim (649).

“In the name of Allāh, and the peace be upon the Messenger of Allāh, O Allāh forgive me my sins and open for me the doors to Your mercy.”¹

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ وَبِوَجْهِهِ الْكَرِيمِ وَسُلْطَانِهِ الْقَدِيمِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ
*A'ūdhu Billāhal 'Aẓīm Bī Wajihial Karim Wa Sulṭānihī
 al-Qadīm Min Ash-Shayṭānir Rajīm.*

“I take refuge in Allāh, the Supreme, and with His noble Face, and His eternal authority, from Shayṭān the accursed.”²

And he is to use the siwāk before the prayer, and face the Qiblah with all his body, with submission and an attentive heart, and belief that Allāh calls upon him in his prayer.

¹ Ibn Mājah (771).

² Abū Dāwūd (466).

The Opening Takbīr (Takbīrah al-Iḥrām)

He makes the intention and makes the Takbīr, saying: “*Allāhu Akbar*,” meaning that Allāh is greater than everything; there is none greater than Allāh in Might and Splendor, so He is greater than everything.

Subḥān Allāh (Glorified is Allāh)! How great is the wisdom of Allāh! The Takbīr (*Allāhu Akbar*) was chosen here rather than *Tasbīḥ* (*Subḥān Allāh*), because the Takbīr indicates the highness of majesty and actuality, so the choice of Takbīr at the beginning of the prayer is completely appropriate due to this wisdom.

The first Takbīr is a must, and that is the Takbīrah al-Iḥrām (opening Takbīr to enter into the state of prayer), which the prayer cannot convene without it. And it is termed as such (Takbīrah al-Iḥrām i.e. the Takbīr to enter you into a state of Iḥrām, hence certain things become impermissible to do during prayer once you begin), because when a person makes the opening Takbīr he enters into the *ḥarīm* [sanctity] of prayer just like a pilgrim enters into the *ḥarīm* of Hajj or ‘Umrah rites. Due to this when he says, “*Allāhu Akbar*” all of that which is impermissible for a person in prayer now becomes impermissible (since he has now entered into prayer).

The evidence for that is the hadith of ‘the one who prayed badly’ (a famous hadith known by that title). Bukhārī narrated from Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه),

“Once the Prophet (ﷺ) entered the mosque, a man came in, offered the prayer, and greeted the Prophet (ﷺ). The Prophet (ﷺ) returned his greeting and said to him, ‘Go back and offer your prayer again for you have not prayed.’ The man offered the prayer again, came back and greeted the Prophet (ﷺ). He said to him thrice, ‘Go back and offer the prayer again for you have not offered the prayer.’ The man said, ‘By Him who has sent you with the truth! I do not know a better way of offering the prayer, kindly teach me how to offer the prayer.’ He (ﷺ) said, ‘When you stand for the prayer, say Takbīr, then recite from the Qur’ān what you know and then bow with calmness until you feel at ease, then rise from bowing till you stand straight. Afterwards prostrate calmly till you feel at ease, and then raise (your head) and sit with calmness till you feel at ease, and then prostrate with calmness till you feel at ease in prostration and do the same in the whole of your prayer.’”¹

And in one version of the narration,

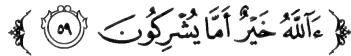
“When you stand for the prayer perfect the Wuḍū (ablution) then face the Qiblah, then make the (opening) Takbīr...”²

¹ Bukhārī (793).

² Bukhārī (6251) and Muslim (397).

And it is a must he says, “*Allāhu Akbar*”, so if he said, “*Allāhu Ajall*” (Allāh the most Majestic), it would not be correct. And if he said, “*Allāhu A'dham*” it would not be correct.

If he said, “*Ā Allāhu Akbar*”, with the beginning stretched, it would not be correct, because if he says “*Ā Allāhu*”, the informative sentence now becomes a questioning sentence (i.e. in Arabic it now means, ‘Is Allāh the Greatest?’), like the statement of Allāh the Most High:



“Is Allāh better, or (all) that you ascribe as partners (to Him)?” (Of course, Allāh is better).” (Al-Naml: 59)

And you are informing that Allāh is the greatest, not enquiring whether Allāh is the greatest. And it is known that this is a grammatical inaccuracy, meaning if you said, “*Ā Allāhu Akbar*” (elongated the opening *Alif*) you would be making a grammatical error which deforms the meaning.

If you said, “*Allāhu Akbār*” with a stretch on the ‘baa’, then the scholars have said it is not acceptable, because ‘*Akbār*’ is the plural of ‘*kabar*’, just like the word ‘*asbāb*’ is the plural of ‘*sabab*’ (means or reason), and ‘*abṭāl*’ is the plural of ‘*baṭal*’ (champion). ‘*kabar*’ linguistically in Arabic is a name for a drum that is played in songs and nashīds, so this corrupts and violates the meaning, hence the *Takbīr* is unacceptable in that instance.

If he said, “*Allāhu Wakbar*”, because some people change the ‘*hamzah*’ to a ‘*waw*’, so they say, “*Allāhu Wakbar*” then the answer here is that it is actually acceptable and correct, since the Arabic language permits the alteration of ‘*Hamzah*’ to a ‘*waw*’ if it is preceded by a ‘*Ḍammah*’ vowel. Hence the meaning does not change, except if a person intended by this ‘*waw*’ the ‘*waw*’ in Arabic which means “and” (since the ‘*waw*’ “و” letter can have multiple meanings in Arabic), then this no doubt corrupts the meaning. However, a person surely does not intend that, rather he intends “*Allāhu Akbar*” if he says “*Allāhu Wakbar*”.

With this *Takbīr* he raises his hands with fingers together and hands flat open, either:

1. **Alongside the *Takbīr*.** Bukhārī narrated that from the hadith of Ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) (735), and Imam Aḥmad (4/316) and Abū Dāwūd (728) narrated it from Wā’il b. Hujr (رضي الله عنه).
2. **Before the *Takbīr*:** Muslim narrated from the hadith of Ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) also, (390).
3. **After the *Takbīr*:** Muslim narrated it from the hadith of Mālik bin al-Huwayrith (رضي الله عنه) (391, and Bukhārī also but without mention of the point here 737).

And the affair in this regard has leeway in it.

The uppermost point of raising the hands is:

- **To the level of the shoulders:** Agreed upon from the hadith of Ibn 'Umar (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ).¹
- **Or, to the level of the ears:** Reported from the hadith of Mālik b. al-Huwayrith (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ).²
- **Or, to the level of the tops of the ears:** Reported from the hadith of Mālik b. al-Huwayrith (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) also.³

Hence, do it like this once and another way another time, (alternate between them) because all of them are evidenced in the Sunnah.

The wisdom in raising the hands alongside the opening Takbīr:

Firstly: Emulating the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). So if a person says to you, “Why did you raise your hands? Respond, “Because the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) raised them.”

Secondly: Some of the scholars said that raising the hands is indicative of raising the barrier between yourself and Allāh so that you are focused with your heart, and that you recognize that you are standing in front of your Lord calling upon Him, calling upon your Lord in the manner of the one calling upon the one he seeks to address.

¹ Bukhārī (735) and Muslim (390).

² Muslim (391).

³ Muslim (391).

From the mistakes made in raising the hands:

- i) That a person raises his hands up to his chest and not up to his shoulders, this is futility, since he has not accomplished the Sunnah.
- ii) That he enters his index fingers into the inside of his ears, since that is (something prescribed in) Wuḍū (not in Takbīr).
- iii) That he touches his ears when raising his hands, and this is not correct, and there is no basis for it.

Then (after that) he places his right hand either:

- On his left arm: Reported by Bukhārī from Sahl b. Sa'd (رضي الله عنه) who said, "The people were ordered to place the right hand on the left forearm in the Prayer."¹
- Or upon his left hand: Reported by Muslim from Wā'il b. Ḥujr (رضي الله عنه) that he saw the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) (doing it as such).² It appears the intent of the hand is the palm, since that is what the word hand in Arabic means in its default sense.
- Or upon his left hand, wrist and forearm, so he places the edge of his right hand on his forearm and the palm of his hand over his wrist and the beginning of the top of the hand. Nasā'ī reported it from Wā'il b. Ḥujr (رضي الله عنه).³

¹ Bukhārī (740).

² Muslim (401).

³ Nasā'ī (890).

The location the hands are placed upon:

- Upon the chest: Reported by Ibn Khuzaimah in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*¹, and he authenticated it, and it is the most authentic narration in this issue, and in it is Mu'ammal b. Ismā'īl, who is Ṣadūq [truthful], poor in memory.
- Or under the naval; reported by Imam Aḥmad and Abū Dāwūd from 'Alī (رضي الله عنه) and he said, "It is from the Sunnah."² (Although) in the chain is 'Abd al-Raḥmān bin Ishāq al-Kūfi who is weak by consensus, hence the hadith is weak.
- Or above the naval: reported by Abū Dāwūd³ from 'Alī from his own action. In it is Ṭālūt, Abū Dāwūd said regarding him, "His hadith can be written".

A Benefit: The Wisdom in that

The First Wisdom: Emulating the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), and this is a principle; you are a believer, you do what the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) did and leave what he left, whether you understand the reasoning or not.

The Second Wisdom: Standing like this is a standing (posture) of humility, and it is deserving for you to stand in

¹ (1/243).

² Abū Dāwūd (756) and Aḥmad (1/110).

³ Abū Dāwūd (757).

humility in front of the Almighty and All-Powerful, so this is submissiveness before the One who is Almighty.

Due to this, it is appropriate to lower the head slightly, but the scholars said he is not to place his chin upon his chest (touching), meaning he is not to lower it extensively to the point that his chin is upon his chest, rather he lowers his head slightly still leaving a gap between the chin and chest.

Some of the people of knowledge said he is to look down to the place of his prostration, and he is not to look right or left due to the hadith of Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه) in the '*Muhadhdhab*' that "when the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) used to start his prayer he did not used to look anywhere other than the place of his prostration."¹ He said in the explanation: I do not know it, and there are narrations (aḥādīth) with this meaning but they are all weak.²

I say: In Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī from the hadith of al-Barā' b. 'Āzib (رضي الله عنه), "Whenever they used to pray with the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and he raised up his head from the bowing, we used to remain standing till we saw him prostrating."³

And regarding it is the hadith of Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه) about the eclipse prayer, "O Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم)! We saw you trying to take something while standing at your place and then we saw you retreating." The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, "I was

¹ *Tuḥfat al-Muhtāj* (1/332).

² *Al-Majmū'* (3/272).

³ Bukhārī (747) and Muslim (474).

shown Paradise and wanted to have a bunch of fruit from it. Had I taken it, you would have eaten from it as long as the World remains.”¹

And if a person is in Masjid al-Ḥarām and in front of him is the Ka'bah then he should not look at the Ka'bah, rather he should look at the location of his prostration; looking at the Ka'bah is not worship, and it is not legislated in the prayer. If a person wants to look at it to ponder and contemplate and recognize the greatness of it, then just looking doesn't make it a worship, rather it's the pondering and recognizing the greatness of the Creator, the Mighty and Majestic (that would be the point).

Likewise, he is not to raise the head upward to the sky, neither during the supplication in *qunūt*, nor whilst raising up from bowing (*rukū'*), nor whilst sitting between the two prostrations, nor in the tashahhud sitting, since raising the eyesight up to the sky during prayer is impermissible. The Prophet (ﷺ) gave a threat upon it. Bukhārī reported from Anas (رضي الله عنه) who said that he (ﷺ) said,

“What is wrong with those people who look towards the sky during the Prayer? They should stop otherwise their eyesight would be snatched away.”²

¹ Bukhārī (748) and Muslim (907).

² Bukhārī (750).

Likewise, the Prophet (ﷺ) threatened them that if they raise their eyesight to the sky during prayer, then their eyesight may not return to them just like in his statement,

“The people must stop raising their eyesight to the sky during the prayer, or it will not return to them.”¹

This indicates that this action is from the forbidden matters, in fact, it is actually a major sin in accordance to the principles of the people of knowledge in determining them.

Some of the scholars took the opinion that if a person raises his eyesight to the sky whilst praying, then his prayer is nullified and he must repeat it from the beginning.

We witness this in al-Masjid al-Harām (sacred mosque of Makkah) and other than it from the mosques. We see people raising their eyesight up to the sky during prayer, especially in supplication of *qunūt*, and this is Harām upon them – impermissible – for indeed our Prophet (ﷺ) threatened them that Allāh, the Most High will cause them blindness, so upon the believer is to refrain from that which the Prophet (ﷺ) prohibited in prayer and other than it.

Additionally, he is not to fidget and turn to the right and to the left, as Bukhārī reported from ‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) who said, “I asked the Prophet (ﷺ) about looking around here and there in the Prayer. He replied, “It is a way of stealing by which

¹ Muslim (428).

Satan takes away (a portion) from the prayer of a person.”¹
Except if he needed to spit or other than that.²

¹ Bukhārī (751).

² Bukhārī (753) and Muslim (547).

The Opening Supplication:

Then he opens the prayer with what has been mentioned from the Prophet (ﷺ):

1. اللَّهُمَّ بَاعِدْ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَ خَطَايَايَ كَمَا بَاعَدْتَ بَيْنَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ
، اللَّهُمَّ نَقِّني مِنَ الْخَطَايَا كَمَا يُنَقَّى الثَّوْبُ الْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ الدَّنَسِ ،
اللَّهُمَّ اغْسِلْ خَطَايَايَ بِالْمَاءِ وَالثَّلْجِ وَالْبَرَدِ¹

Allāhumma Bā'id Baynī Wa Bayna Khaṭāyāya Kamā Bā'adta Baynal Mashriq Wal Maghrib Allāhumma Naqqinī Minal Khaṭāyā Kamā Yunaqqal Thawbal Abyaḍ Minad Danas. Allāhumma Ighsil Khaṭāyāya Bil Mā Wath Thalj Wal Barad.

“O Allāh, set me apart from my sins just as you have set apart the East from the West, O Allāh purify me of my sins as a white garment is purified of dirt, O Allāh cleanse me of my sins with snow, water, and hail.”

Muslim reported it as, “purify me from my errors” and “cleanse me from my errors with snow, water, and hail.”²

Bukhārī reported it from Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) who said, “When the Prophet (ﷺ) made the Takbīr for prayer (opening Takbīr) he would be silent for a moment before reciting”, and that was in the loud prayer, and it was not

¹ Bukhārī (744).

² Muslim (598).

possible for the companions to leave any matter small or big that they needed to understand except that they would ask about it. “May my parents be sacrificed for you! What do you say in the pause between the Takbīr and recitation?” The Prophet (ﷺ) said, “O Allāh set me apart from my sins just as you have set apart the East from the West, O Allāh purify me of my sins as a white garment is purified of dirt, O Allāh cleanse me of my sins with snow, water, and hail.”¹

And this is the most authentic hadith mentioned in that regard, despite the fact that the majority of Muslims today do not know about this opening supplication, and do not open up their prayer with it.

The Prophet (ﷺ) was saying this supplication and Allāh has already forgiven his past and future sins, despite that he was saying, “O Allāh set me apart from my sins just as you have set apart the East from the West”, meaning so that I don’t get near them and do not hover in their vicinity. So you ask Allāh to keep you away from sins, and that He distances them from you so that you are not in contact with them, and hence fall into them. This is a supplication for something before its occurrence, because if something is distant from you then it will not occur from you (or to you).

If, however, it does occur then cleanse me as the white garment is cleansed of its dirt, i.e. remove them from me and

¹ Bukhārī (744).

make me cleansed of them. Then he gave an example, a parable for this in his statement, “just like a white garment is cleansed of its dirt.” The Messenger (ﷺ) chose the white garment since the appearance of dirt on white is much more blatant and clear, so even the smallest amount of dirt on a white garment will be plain to see. But the signs of dirt would not appear on a black or red garment unless it was severe dirt.

After cleansing, there may still be remnants of dirt so he said, “O Allāh cleanse me”, so that the remnants disappear. If some dirt fell on your garment for example, and you scraped it with your fingernail until it was cleaned, we say this is cleaning, then after that comes the turn of actual washing (to remove the remaining stain etc.). Hence, if the impurity was on the garment, then initially remove the impurity (scraping, rubbing etc.) until the garment is cleansed of it, and then wash it too.

You may say water no doubt purifies, but what is well known is that hot water is more potent in cleansing and removing dirt, since hot water cleanses more than cold water. When we wash a garment with soap we warm the water, so why did he say, “with water and snow and hail”?

We say, the scholars said, because he is asking Allāh to purify him from sins, he says, “cleanse me from sins”, and not from physical dirt. Sins and wrongdoings carry the punishment of the Fire, and the Fire is hot, and what is suitable is to remove something by its opposing force. Therefore, that which suits hot fire is water, snow and hail. So it is suitable that the removal

of sins is with something cold so that the effect of punishment is removed altogether, and that is why he said, “with water and snow and hail”; this is the wisdom.

This opening comprises of distancing from sins before their occurrence, cleansing from them after they do occur, and removal of their remnants absolutely by washing with water, snow, and hail.

2. سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَبِحَمْدِكَ ، وَتَبَارَكَ اسْمُكَ ، وَتَعَالَى جَدُّكَ وَلَا إِلَهَ

غَيْرُكَ¹

Subhānak Allāhumma Wa Biḥamdika Wa Tabāraka Ismuka Wa Ta‘ālā Jadduka Wa Lā Ilāha Ghayruk.

“How perfect you are O Allāh, and I praise You. Blessed be Your name, and lofty is Your position and none has the right to be worshipped except You”. Abū Dāwūd reported it from ‘Ā’ishah and in its chain there is some speech. Al-Hākim authenticated it, and Ibn Ḥajr (رحمته الله) said, “the men of its chain are authentic but there is breakage in it”, (chain is not connected).²

Muslim³ also reported it from ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) from his saying, and that he used to say it out loud in the prayer so that the people would learn it just as Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) used to recite

¹ Abū Dāwūd (776).

² *Talkhīṣ al-Khabīr* (1/559).

³ Muslim (399).

the Fātiḥah in Janāzah prayer out loud so that the people would know it is a Sunnah.¹

All the people say this, but only few understand its meaning, 'Subḥānak Allāhumma,' Meaning I glorify you that you are free from any deficiencies. *Tasbīḥ* is the glorification of Allāh in being free of all of that which is not suitable to Him. That which is not befitting to Allāh is two types: either resemblance to creation, or deficiency in His attributes, so it is as if you say: 'I declare You to be far above and free, my Lord, of resemblance to the creation and from any deficiency in Your attributes.'

As for his statement, 'and I praise You', "وبحمدك" the ب here is for accompaniment and addition, which means 'I add to my glorification of You my praise for your complete and perfect attributes,' since Allāh is praised upon His complete and perfect attributes, and upon His all-encompassing virtue and kindness.

'*Tabārak Ismuka*', the scholars said its meaning is that blessing is received through Your name. Hence if a person names Allāh upon slaughtering the animal it becomes ḥalāl [lawful], and if he slaughtered and did not name Allāh upon it then it is ḥarām [unlawful] due to the statement of Allāh:

﴿وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا مِمَّا لَمْ يُذَكِّرْ أَسْمُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ﴾

¹ Bukhārī (1335).

“Eat not (O believers) of that (meat) on which Allāh's Name has not been pronounced (at the time of the slaughtering of the animal).” (Al-An‘ām: 121).

And the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ), “And eat the animals if the name of Allāh has been mentioned on slaughtering them.”¹

Look at the blessing! This sheep, if you slaughter it and do not mention the name of Allāh upon it, it becomes a corpse, impure and ḥarām [unlawful]. However, if you say, ‘In the name of Allāh’ it becomes legislatively slaughtered, pure and ḥalāl [lawful]. This is from the blessing (*Barakah*).

From the blessing also is what the Prophet (ﷺ) indicated in his statement, “If anyone of you on having sexual relations with his wife said (and he must say it before starting), ‘In the name of Allāh. O Allāh protect us from Satan and also protect what You bestow upon us (i.e. the coming offspring), from Satan.’ And if it is destined that they should have a child then, Satan will never be able to harm that offspring.”²

Due to this the scholars said ‘*Tabārak Ismuka*’ (blessed be Your name), meaning that blessing is received through your name.

“*Ta‘ālā Jadduka*” means Your greatness and majesty and self-sufficiency not requiring anyone. “*Ta‘ālā*,” meaning raised

¹ Bukhārī (2488) and Muslim (1968).

² Bukhārī (141) and Muslim (1434).

above being affected by any deficiency, so the 'Jadd' of Allāh is His greatness and self-sufficiency and majesty above every greatness, and above every majesty. This is why all the kings in relation to Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic, are nothing, and that is why He said "Allāh will grasp the whole (planet) Earth (by His Hand) and roll all the Heavens up with His Right Hand, and then He will say, "I am the King; where are the kings of the Earth?"¹

They are nothing, the kings of the world on Judgment Day will be on the same standing as the lowest of their servants (that they had in this world), no matter what their kingdom reaches in the world, for indeed it will vanish away on Judgment Day. Allāh says:

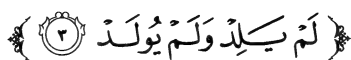
﴿يَوْمَ هُمْ بَارِزُونَ لَا يَخْفَىٰ عَلَى اللَّهِ مِنْهُمْ شَيْءٌ لِّمَنِ الْمُلْكُ الْيَوْمَ لِلَّهِ الْوَاحِدِ

الْقَهَّارِ ﴿١٦﴾

"The Day when they will (all) come out, nothing of them will be hidden from Allāh. Whose is the kingdom this Day? (Allāh Himself will reply to His Question): It is Allāh's the One, the Irresistible!" (Ghāfir: 16).

Therefore, 'Ta'ālā Jadduka', meaning Your greatness and majesty and self-sufficiency. Some of the commoners say, Allāh says:

¹ Bukhārī (4812) and Muslim (2787).



"He begets not, nor was He begotten" (al-Ikhlās: 3)

How can it be said, "*Ta'ālā Jadduka*"? They think the '*Jadd*' means grandfather, i.e. the father's or the mother's father, but this is an incorrect understanding.

"*Wa Lā ilāha Ghayruka*," meaning there is no deity in truth besides You. Based upon this explanation we say, what we hear from some commoners when they say, "There is no deity besides You and no one to be worshipped besides You" is incorrect, since "*Lā ilāha Ghayruka*" suffices from having to say, "*Lā Ma'būda Siwāka*." So say, "*Lā ilāha Ghayruka*" and it is sufficient.

3. وَجْهَتْ وَجْهِي لِلَّذِي فَطَرَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا أَنَا
مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ، إِنَّ صَلَاتِي ، وَنُسُكِي ، وَمَحْيَايَ ، وَمَمَاتِي ،
لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ، لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ ، وَبِذَلِكَ أُمِرْتُ وَأَنَا مِنَ
الْمُسْلِمِينَ ، اللَّهُمَّ أَنْتَ الْمَلِكُ ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ ، أَنْتَ رَبِّي
وَأَنَا عَبْدُكَ ، ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي ، وَاعْتَرَفْتُ بِذُنُوبِي ، فَاعْفُ رِ
دُّنُوبِي جَمِيعًا ، إِنَّهُ لَا يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ ، وَاهْدِنِي
لِأَحْسَنِ الْأَخْلَاقِ ، لَا يَهْدِي لِأَحْسَنِهَا إِلَّا أَنْتَ ، وَاصْرِفْ
عَنِّي سَيِّئَهَا ، لَا يَصْرِفُ عَنِّي سَيِّئَهَا إِلَّا أَنْتَ ، لَبَّيْكَ

وَسَعْدَيْكَ ، وَالْخَيْرُ كُلُّهُ فِي يَدَيْكَ ، وَالشَّرُّ لَيْسَ إِلَيْكَ ، أَنَا
بِكَ ، وَإِلَيْكَ تَبَارَكْتَ وَتَعَالَيْتَ ، أَسْتَغْفِرُكَ وَأَتُوبُ إِلَيْكَ

*Wajjahtu Wajhī Lilladhī Faṭaras Samāwāti Wal Ardi
Ḥanīfan Wa Mā Ana Minal Mushrikīn Inna Salāti Wa
Nusukī Wa Mahyāya Wa Mamātī Lillahi Rabbil 'Ālamīn
Lā Sharīka Lahu Wa Bi Dhālika Umirtu Wa Ana Minal
Muslimīn¹ Allāhumma Antal Maliku Lā Ilāha Illa Anta
Anta Rabbī Wa Ana 'Abduka Dhalamtu Nafsī Wa Ġtarafu
Bi Dhanbī Faghfir Lī Dhunūbī Jamī'an Innahu Lā
Yaghfirudh Dhunūba Illa Anta Wahdinī Li Ahsanil Akhlāq
Lā Yahdī Ila Ahsanihā Illa Anta Waṣrif 'Annī Sayyi'ahā Lā
Yaṣrifu 'Annī Sayyi'ahā Illa Anta Labbayka Wa Sa'dayka
Wal Khayr Kulluhi Bi Yadayka Wash Sharr Laysa Ilayka
Ana Bika Wa Ilayka Tabārakata Wa Ta'ālayta
Astaghfiruka Wa Atūbu Ilayka.*

“I have turned my face sincerely towards He, the one Who created the Heavens and Earth and I am not from those who associate partners to Allah; indeed, my prayer, my sacrifice, my life and my death are for Allah, Lord of all creation, no partner has He, with this I am commanded and I am from the Muslims –and in one narration ‘I am the first of the Muslims.’ – O Allah, You are the Sovereign, none has the right to be worshipped except you, You are my Lord and I am your servant. I

¹ In one narration: *Wa Ana Auwalul Muslimīn.*

have wronged my own soul and acknowledged my sin, so forgive for me all of my sins, none forgives sins except You. Guide me to the best of characters, for none can guide to it except You, and deliver me from the worst of characters, for none can deliver me from it except You. Here I am in answer to Your call, to serve You. All good is within your hands and evil does not stem from You. I exist by Your will and will return to You, Blessed and High are You, I seek Your forgiveness and repent unto You.”

Muslim reported it from ‘Alī b. Abū Ṭālib who said, “When the Prophet (ﷺ) used to open the prayer and make Takbīr then he would say... (mentioned the supplication)”¹

In the narration of Abū Dāwūd ² it explicitly mentions that when he would stand to pray an obligatory prayer he would do the Takbīr and say (the supplication), and this was typically in the night prayer.

4) The one praying opens up the night prayer with that which the Prophet (ﷺ) used to open up with, and that is:

4. اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّ جِبْرَائِيلَ، وَمِيكَائِيلَ، وَإِسْرَافِيلَ، فَاطِرَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ،
عَالِمِ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ ، أَنْتَ تَحْكُمُ بَيْنَ عِبَادِكَ فِيمَا كَانُوا فِيهِ

¹ Muslim (771).

² (761).

يَخْتَلِفُونَ ، اهْدِنِي لِمَا اخْتَلَفَ فِيهِ مِنَ الْحَقِّ بِإِذْنِكَ ، إِنَّكَ تَهْدِي مَنْ

تَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ¹

*Allāhumma Rabba Jibrā'il Wa Mikā'il Wa Isrāfīl Fāṭiras
Samawāti Wal Arḍi 'Ālimal Ghayb Wash Shahādah Anta
Taḥkumu Bayna 'Ibādika Fīmā Yakhtalifūna Fihi Ihdinī
Limakhtulifa Fihi Minal Ḥaqq Bi Ithnika Innaka Tahdī
Man Tashā Ilaṣ Ṣirāṭil Mustaqīm.*

“O Allah Lord of Jibrīl, Mikā'il and Isrāfīl, Creator of the Heavens and the Earth, Knower of the seen and unseen, You rule between Your servants in that which there is a difference. Guide me to the truth in that which they have differed, for verily You guide whom You will to the straight path.”

And whichever opening supplication he begins with from that which is established from the Prophet (ﷺ), then it counts and suffices him.

Say this one once and that one once, sometimes this and sometimes that, to act upon all the Sunan, but do not combine between them (all in one beginning to a prayer), because if you combine all of them you have opposed the Sunnah. The evidence for that is that when Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) asked the Prophet (ﷺ): ‘What do you say?’ He did not mention to

¹ Muslim (770).

him except one only, and this indicates that you do not combine between various supplications (in one go).

Seeking Refuge in Allāh:

After the opening supplication with one of the aforementioned supplications, he says:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ السَّمِيعِ الْعَلِيمِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ مِنْ هَمْزِهِ وَنَفْخِهِ وَنَفْثِهِ

A'ūdhu Billāhis Samī il 'Alīm Minas Shayṭānir Rajīm Min Hamzihi Wa Nafkhihi Wa Nafthih.

“I seek refuge in Allāh, the all-Hearing, the all-Knowing from the accursed Shayṭān from his coercion, lures to arrogance and poems”, he said in *Bulūgh al-Marām*, reported by the five¹

Or he can say,

“أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ”

A'ūdhu Billāhi Minas Shayṭānir Rajīm.

“I seek refuge in Allāh from Shayṭān the accursed.”

¹ Abū Dāwūd (775), Tirmidhī (242), Aḥmad (3/50), and Ibn Mājah (808).

The Recitation:

He recites the 'Basmalah': *'Bismillah al-Rahmān al-Rahīm*, then he recites the whole of al-Fātiḥah upon the manner it was revealed, with its letters and sounds, the stressed sounds and light sounds (i.e. correct pronunciation), such that he does not change anything of it, whether he is the Imam, or alone, or in congregation being led. If he does change anything of it (in pronunciation) we look to see, if it ends up changing the meaning then it is incorrect and not acceptable, but if the meaning doesn't change then it is acceptable. So if a person said: *'an' amtu 'alayhim*' (i.e. pronounces it as "*an' amtu*"), then it is incorrect and unacceptable, because if he says "*An' amtu 'alayhim*" (I bestowed upon them) the one giving the blessings is the reciter himself, but if he says it accurately as "*an' amtu*" then the one providing the blessings is Allāh.

If he pronounced something incorrectly on purpose, but it doesn't change the meaning, then that is impermissible but it does not nullify the Fātiḥah. For example saying, "*Alḥamdu lillāh Rabbal 'Ālamīn*", while the correct way is, "*Alḥamdu lillāh Rabbil 'Ālamīn*".

The Fātiḥah is seven verses. The first of them is,

﴿الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾

And the last is,

﴿غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ﴾

The evidence for that is the hadith of Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, “Allāh said, “I have divided the prayer into two [parts] between Myself and My servant, so when the servant says, “All the praises and thanks be to Allāh, the Lord of the ‘Ālamīn (mankind, jinn and all that exists)”, Allāh the Most High says, “My servant has praised Me”, and when he says, “The Most Gracious, the Most Merciful”, Allāh the Most High says, “My servant has lauded Me”, and when the servant says, “The Only Owner (and the Only Ruling Judge) of the Day of Recompense (i.e. the Day of Resurrection)”, Allāh the Most high says, “My servant has glorified Me.” And he (the narrator) said once (instead), “My servant has entrusted himself to Me.” When he says, “You (Alone) we worship, and You (Alone) we ask for help (for each and everything).”, Allāh says, “This is between Me and My servant, and for my servant is what he asks for.” And when he says, “Guide us to the Straight Way”, Allāh says, “This is between Me and My servant and for My servant is what he asks for.”¹

So it is made clear through this hadith that the beginning of Fātiḥah is: “All the praises and thanks be to Allāh, the Lord of the ‘Ālamīn (mankind, jinn and all that exists)”, hence if the one praying dropped the *Basmalah* on purpose then his prayer would still be correct, because it is not from the Fātiḥah.

¹ Muslim (395).

The *Basmalah* is a verse from the Qur'ān, but it is not a verse from every chapter, rather it is an independent ayah that is read at the beginning of every chapter except Surah Barā'ah, for that does not have the *Basmalah* in it. Neither does it have a substitute contrary to what is found in some copies of the Qur'ān where it is written on the sides, "I seek refuge in Allāh from the Fire, and from the plots of the evil, and from the anger of the Mighty, power and honor is for Allāh and His Messenger and the believers." I found this written in some copies of the Qur'ān at the side at the beginning of Surah Barā'ah, and this is a mistake, it is not correct, for it does not have the *Basmalah*, nor does it have any substitute for the *Basmalah*.

It is a pillar, so there is no prayer for the one who does not recite the Fātiḥah due to the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ),

"Whoever does not recite Surah al-Fātiḥah in his prayer, then his prayer is invalid."¹

Imam Muslim reported from the hadith of Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه),

"Whoever prays a prayer and does not recite the al-Fātiḥah, then it is cut-off, deficient and incomplete." He repeated it thrice. So it was said to Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه),

¹ Bukhārī (756) and Muslim (394) from the ḥadīth of 'Ubādah b. Ṣāmit.

“We are behind the Imam (being led in congregation).”

He said, “Read it to yourself (quietly).”¹

And he reported from ‘Aṭā who said that Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) said, “In every prayer he reads, whatever the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) used to allow us to hear we allow you to hear, and what he hid from us (quiet recitation) we hide from you (read quietly).” So a man said to him, “(What if) I do not add anything on top of al-Fātiḥah?” So he said, “If you add on top of it (another surah of the Qur’ān or some recitation) then that is good, and if you stop at just the Fātiḥah it suffices you (the prayer is correct).”²

And it is narrated from ‘Ubādah bin Ṣāmit (رضي الله عنه) who said,

“The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) led Fajr prayer, and the recitation became heavy upon him, so when he left he said, ‘I see you are reciting behind your Imam.’ We said, ‘O Messenger of Allāh, by Allāh yes.’ He said, ‘Do not do so except with the *Umm al-Qur’ān* (al-Fātiḥah), for indeed there is no prayer for the one who does not read it.” Reported by Tirmidhī – and the wording is his – and he declared it hasan, and reported by Abū Dāwūd also³.

And in one narration reported by him⁴, “Do you recite when I recite out loud?” So some of us said, “Indeed we do that.” He

¹ Muslim (395).

² Muslim (396).

³ Abū Dāwūd (823) and Tirmidhī (311).

⁴ Abū Dāwūd (824).

said, "So don't, and I say, what is with me that they contend with me in the Qur'ān, so do not recite anything from the Qur'ān if I am reciting out loud except the *Umm al-Qur'ān* (al-Fātiḥah)".

And Nasāī¹ reported a similar narration to the second one of Abū Dāwūd, and al-Dāraqṭunī² reported it also, and said, "They are all *thiqāt*", (authentic, established narrators in accordance to required conditions).

As for the hadith of Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه),

"The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) left from a prayer he had recited out loud in and then said, 'Did anyone read along with me?' (i.e. was anyone reading whilst I was leading and reading out loud) So a man said, 'Yes, O Messenger of Allāh.' So he said, 'What is with me that they contend with me in the Qur'ān.' So the people stopped reciting alongside the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) when he was reciting out loud in the loud prayers when they heard that from the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم)".³

So it is not an abrogation of the hadith of 'Ubādah (رضي الله عنه) as some of them claimed, and that is due to the possibility of being able to combine between them by understanding this

¹ Nasāī (921).

² Sunan Dāraqṭunī (1/319).

³ Reported by Abū Dāwūd (826) and Malik in al-Muwatta (1/96).

hadith as referring to anything other than the Fātiḥah, and there is no abrogation if the possibility of being able to make a combination exists, as the scholars in principles of Hadith and Fiqh (jurisprudence) have stated.

And the person is to stop at the end of each ayah (verse) even if it is connected to that which comes after it.

The Fātiḥah is excused for the person if he is late and is afraid of missing the unit (*rak'ah*) if he recites the Fātiḥah, for example if he catches the prayer and the Imam is in the bowing (*rukū'*) or just about to go into the bowing. Bukhārī reported from Abū Bakrah that "he arrived and the Prophet (ﷺ) was in the bowing (*rukū'*), so he (made the opening *Takbīr*) and went into the bowing before reaching the row, so he mentioned that to the Prophet (ﷺ). He said, "May Allāh increase you in zeal but do not do that again."¹

Then he says upon finishing the Fātiḥah, "*Āmīn*", raising his voice with it in the loud prayers if he is the Imam, that is reported by Abū Dāwūd ² from Wā'il bin Ḥujr (رضي الله عنه) who said, "When the Prophet (ﷺ) read ﴿لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ﴾ he used to say '*Āmīn*' and raise his voice with it." Tirmidhī reported a similar narration³.

¹ Bukhārī (783).

² Abū Dāwūd (932).

³ Tirmidhī (248).

In the two Ṣaḥīḥ books (Bukhārī and Muslim) from the hadith of Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه), “When the Imam says ‘Āmīn’ then you all say ‘Āmīn’”¹.

The meaning of ‘Āmīn’ is “O Allāh answer (the supplication)”, so it is a verbal noun meaning ‘answer’ (or ‘respond’).

The one being led in the congregation also says it out loud too. Ibn Mājah reported from Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) who said, “The people left saying the ‘Āmīn’, yet when the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) used to say, ﴿وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ﴾ he would say ‘Āmīn’ so that the people of the first row would hear and the mosque would reverberate from it (from everyone saying it).”²

In ‘Ilām al-Muwaqqi‘īn³ from ‘Aṭā (رحمته الله) who said, “I came across 200 from the companions of the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) in this Mosque, and if the Imam said,

﴿وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ﴾

I heard a reverberation from them saying ‘Āmīn’”⁴.

‘Abd al-Razzāq⁵ reported from ‘Aṭā (رحمته الله) who said, “I used to hear the Imams saying after reciting the *Umm al-Qur’ān* (al-

¹ Bukhārī (780), Muslim (410).

² Ibn Mājah (853).

³ ‘Ilām al-Muwaqqi‘īn (2/439).

⁴ Bayhaqī (2/59).

⁵ (2/97).

Fātiḥah) *Āmīn*', they themselves and those behind them to the extent that the mosque had a reverberation to it."¹

Then he pauses for a very slight pause. Abū Dāwūd reported from Qatādah from Hasan, that "Samurah b. Jundub and 'Imran bin Hussain were revising so Samurah b. Jundub said that he memorized from the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) two pauses: a pause after the initial opening *Takbīr* (where he would have been reading the opening supplications), and a pause after finishing the recitation of:

﴿غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ﴾

So Samurah bin Jundub memorized that, but 'Imran bin Hussain rejected that, so they wrote to 'Ubayy bin Ka'b, who in his correspondence to them wrote that Samurah has indeed memorized (accurately)"².

Ibn al-Qayyim (رحمه الله) said, "The hadith of the two pauses is authentic from the narration of Samurah and 'Ubayy bin Ka'b and 'Imrān b. Hussain, Abū Ḥātim mentioned that in his 'Ṣaḥīḥ."³

¹ Bayhaqī (2/59).

² Abū Dāwūd (779).

³ *Zād al-Ma'ād* (1/107).

And Ibn Ḥajr (رَحِمَهُ اللهُ) said, "The pause which is between the Fātiḥah and the Surah (to be read after it) is established in the hadith of Samurah with Abū Dāwūd and others"¹.

Then he recites after the Fātiḥah whatever is easy for him from the Qur'ān, but it is better if it is a whole chapter (surah). Usually in the Fajr it is the long chapters of the 'Mufaṣṣal' section, in Maghrib the short chapters from the 'Mufaṣṣal' section, and in the remaining prayers from the medium length chapters of the 'Mufaṣṣal' section, because the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said to Mu'adh (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ), "If only you had read:

﴿سَبِّحْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ الْأَعْلَى﴾

"Exalt the name of your Lord, the Most High"

﴿وَاللَّيْلُ إِذَا يَغْشَى﴾

"By the night when it covers."

﴿وَالشَّمْسُ وَضُحَاهَا﴾

"By the sun and its brightness."

And what is similar to that".²

Nasā'ī reported from Sulayman b. Yassār from Abū Hurairah (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) who said,

¹ Al-Fath (2/330).

² Bukhārī (705) and Muslim (465).

“I never prayed behind anyone resembling the prayer of the Prophet (ﷺ) more than such and such.” Sulayman said, “He used to lengthen the first two units of Dhuhr prayer, and lighten the last two, and he would lighten (not make too long) the ‘Aṣr prayer, and he would read in the Maghrib the short chapters of the ‘*Mufaṣṣal*’, and he would recite in the ‘Ishā the medium chapters of the ‘*Mufaṣṣal*’, and he would read in the Fajr the long chapters of the ‘*Mufaṣṣal*’”.¹

He said (i.e. Ibn Ḥajr) in *Fath al-Bārī*: Nasāʾī reported it, and Ibn Khuzaimah and others authenticated it. And he said in *Bulūgh al-Marām*: Nasāʾī reported it with an authentic chain of narration.

And Aḥmad reported it with the wording, “...and he would read in the first two of Maghrib the short chapters of the ‘*Mufaṣṣal*’, and he would read in the first two of ‘Ishā the medium chapters of the ‘*Mufaṣṣal*’”.²

The ‘*Mufaṣṣal*’ section begins from Surah Qāf to the end of Surah an-Naas; the long chapters of the ‘*Mufaṣṣal*’ section are from Surah Qāf to Surah al-Naba’, the medium chapters of the ‘*Mufaṣṣal*’ are from Surah al-Naba’ to Surah al-Ḍuḥa, and the short chapters of the ‘*Mufaṣṣal*’ section are from Surah ad-Ḍuḥa to the end of Surah an-Naas.

¹ Nasāʾī (983).

² Aḥmad (2/329).

It is termed as the '*Mufaṣṣal*' (the detailed, itemized) section due to its many pauses or breaks, because the chapters are small, (hence many breaks in between chapter to chapter, whereas the opening chapters are very long until a natural break arrives at the end of them).

And it is Sunnah in the two units of a two-unit prayer, and in the first two units of others than it (i.e. 3-unit and 4-unit prayers).

Bukhārī and Muslim reported from Abū Qatādah, "The Prophet (ﷺ) used to recite in the first two units of Dhuhr and 'Aṣr with the Fātiḥah and a chapter – and in another narration – two chapters"¹. In another narration reported by Bukhārī, "And a chapter and a chapter"², "and he would enable us to hear the verse sometimes, and he would recite in the other two units the Fātiḥah"³.

And in another narration, "He would elongate the first unit of Dhuhr and shorten the second one, and likewise in Fajr"⁴.

And in another narration of Bukhārī, he mentioned the recitation of the Prophet (ﷺ) in the first two units of Dhuhr prayer as having been Fātiḥah with two additional chapters, and in the last two units as just the Fātiḥah, then he said, "...he would enable us to hear the verse, and he would

¹ Bukhārī (762).

² Bukhārī (762).

³ Bukhārī (778) and Muslim (451). This is the wording of Muslim.

⁴ Bukhārī (779), Muslim (451).

elongate the first unit to an extent he would not elongate the second, and likewise in 'Aṣr, and likewise in Fajr".¹

And in another narration he mentioned his recitation (ﷺ) in the Dhuhr and 'Aṣr prayers in the first two units, then he said, "He used to elongate the first unit", and he did not restrict it to Dhuhr².

As for the final unit of Maghrib and the last two units of Dhuhr, 'Aṣr, and 'Ishā, then he is not to read anything besides the Fātiḥah alone, and if he did read anything in addition to the Fātiḥah occasionally then that is good.

Muslim reported from Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (رضي الله عنه),

"The Prophet (ﷺ) used to recite in each unit of the first two units of Dhuhr prayer the equivalent of thirty ayahs, and in the other two units the equivalent of fifteen ayahs – or he said, half of that (i.e. half of thirty, so fifteen still), and in 'Aṣr in each unit of the first two units the equivalent of fifteen ayahs, and in the other two units half of that".³

A person should attempt to pick out and recite that which the Prophet used to recite, so from that:

In the Fajr prayer:

¹ Bukhārī (776).

² Bukhārī (778).

³ Muslim (452).

1 – Bukhārī and Muslim reported – and the wording is from Muslim – from Abū Barza al-Aslamī said,

“The Prophet (ﷺ) used to recite in Fajr between 60 to 100 verses”.¹

In a narration of Bukhārī,

“And he used to recite in the two units – or one of them – between 60 and 100 verses”.²

2 – Muslim reported from ‘Abdullah b. Sā’ib (رضي الله عنه) who said,

“The Prophet (ﷺ) led us in Fajr prayer in Makkah and he opened up reading Surah al-Mu’minūn until he reached the mentioning of Mūsá and Harūn, or Īsá – Muḥammad b. ‘Abbād was unsure or they differed over it – then the Prophet (ﷺ) was overcome by a cough, so he bowed.”³ That was in the year of the conquest of Makkah as it is mentioned in Sunan an-Nasā’ī.

3 – Muslim reported also from Jābir b. Samurah (رضي الله عنه) who said,

“Indeed the Prophet (ﷺ) used to recite in Fajr with “Qāf. [These letters (Qāf, etc.) are one of the miracles of the Qur’ān, and none but Allāh (Alone) knows their

¹ Bukhārī (541) and Muslim (461).

² Bukhārī (771).

³ Muslim (455).

meanings]. By the Glorious Qur'ān.” (Qāf: 1), and in one narration, “with ‘Qāf’ and similar to it”¹.

And in Musnad of Aḥmad, “with ‘Wāqi‘ah’ and similar to it”².

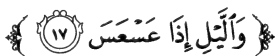
4 – Bukhārī reported from Umm Salamah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا) who said,

“I informed Allāh’s Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) (about my illness). He said, “Perform *Ṭawāf* (circumambulation of the Ka‘bah) behind the people on your (camel) riding.” In another narration, “Perform the *Ṭawāf* on your camel while the people are in prayer.” So I did *Ṭawāf* and the Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) was praying at the side of the House reading Surah al-Ṭūr”³.

5 – Nasāī reported from a man from the companions of the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ),

“He prayed Fajr prayer, and he recited Surah Rūm and it became mixed up (forgetfulness in it) ...”⁴

6 – Muslim⁵ reported from ‘Amr b. Hurayth (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ), “He heard the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) recite in Fajr:



¹ Muslim (458).

² Aḥmad (5/104).

³ Bukhārī (1626) & (464).

⁴ Nasāī (948).

⁵ (456).

‘And by the night as it departs.’ (Takwīr: 17)

Nasāī¹ reported it with the wording, “He recites in Fajr,

﴿إِذَا الشَّمْسُ كُوِّرَتْ ۝١﴾

‘When the sun Kuwwirat (wound round and lost its light and is overthrown).’ (Takwīr: 1)

7 – Imam Aḥmad reported from a man from the people of Madinah, “He prayed behind the Prophet (ﷺ) and heard him recite in Fajr prayer,

﴿قَ وَالْقُرْآنِ الْمَجِيدِ ۝١﴾

‘Qāf. [These letters (Qāf, etc.) are one of the miracles of the Qur’ān, and none but Allāh (Alone) knows their meanings]. By the Glorious Qur’ān.” (Qāf: 1)

And,

﴿يَس ۝١ وَالْقُرْآنِ الْحَكِيمِ ۝٢﴾

‘Yā Sīn. By the Qur’ān, full of wisdom (i.e. full of laws, evidences, and proofs),’ (Yā Sīn: 1).²

8 – Abū Dāwūd reported from a man from Juhaynah, “He heard the Prophet (ﷺ) recite in Fajr,

¹ (952).

² Aḥmad (4/34).

﴿إِذَا زُلْزِلَتِ الْأَرْضُ زِلْزَالَهَا ۝١﴾

‘When the earth is shaken with its (final) earthquake.’

(Al-Zalzalah: 1),

In both units, so I don’t know, did the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) forget or do that purposely.”¹

9 – Nasā’ī reported from ‘Uqbah b. ‘Āmir (رضي الله عنه),

he asked the Prophet (ﷺ) about the *Mu‘awwadhtayn* (Surah al-Falaq & al-Nās)”, ‘Uqbah said, “So the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) led us in Fajr with those two chapters.”²

10 – Bukhārī and Muslim reported from Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) who said, “The Prophet (ﷺ) used to recite on Friday in Fajr prayer,

﴿الر ۝١ تَنْزِيلُ﴾

(Surah) al-Sajdah: “Alif Lām Mīm. The revelation of the Book (this Qur’ān) is from the Lord of the ‘Alamin (mankind, jinns and all that exists) in which there is not doubt!’ (Sajdah: 1), and

﴿هَذَا أَنَّى عَلَى الْإِنْسَانِ حِينٌ مِّنَ الدَّهْرِ لَمْ يَكُن شَيْئًا مَّذْكُورًا ۝١﴾

¹ Abū Dāwūd (816).

² Nasā’ī (953).

‘Has there not been over man a period of time, when he was nothing to be mentioned?’” (Insān: 1)”¹

In the Dhuhr Prayer:

1 – The hadith of Abū Sa‘īd (رضي الله عنه) has already been mentioned from Muslim,

“The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) used to recite in each unit of the first two units of Dhuhr prayer the equivalent of thirty ayahs, and in the other two units the equivalent of fifteen ayahs – or he said, half of that (i.e. half of thirty, so fifteen still), and in ‘Aṣr in each unit of the first two units the equivalent of fifteen ayahs, and in the other two units half of that”.²

2 – Muslim reported from Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī (رضي الله عنه) who said,

“The Dhuhr prayer would begin, whilst someone may go to Baqī‘ and answer the call of nature, then make ablution, then return and the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was still in the first unit due to how he would prolong it.”³

3 – Muslim reported from Jābir b. Samurah (رضي الله عنه) who said,

¹ Bukhārī (891) and Muslim (880).

² Muslim (452).

³ Muslim (454).

“The Prophet (ﷺ) used to recite in Dhuhr with ‘By the night as it envelops.’ (Surah al-Layl: 1). And in ‘Aṣr with something similar.”¹

In another narration, “He would recite in Dhuhr,

﴿سَبِّحْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ الْأَعْلَى﴾

‘Glorify the Name of your Lord, the Most High.’ (Surah al-A‘lá: 1)².

Abū Dāwūd reported a similar narration, and had the addition,

“And the (other) prayers similarly except Fajr, for indeed he would elongate that”³.

4 – Nasā’ī reported from al-Barā’ (رضي الله عنه) who said,

“We used to pray Dhuhr behind the Prophet (ﷺ) and we used to hear verse after verse from Surah Luqmān and ad-Dhāriyāt”⁴.

5 – Nasā’ī reported also from Anas (رضي الله عنه) who said, “Indeed I prayed Dhuhr with the Prophet (ﷺ) and he read with these two chapters in the two units,

﴿سَبِّحْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ الْأَعْلَى﴾ ”

¹ Muslim (459).

² Muslim (460).

³ Abū Dāwūd (806).

⁴ Nasā’ī (972).

'Glorify the Name of your Lord, the Most High' (Surah al-A'lá) and:

﴿ هَلْ أَتَاكَ حَدِيثُ الْغَاشِيَةِ ۝١ ﴾

'Has there come to you the narration of the overwhelming (i.e. the Day of Resurrection).' (Surah al-Ghāshiyah)¹.

6 – He (Nasā'ī) also reported from Jābir b. Samurah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) that the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) "used to recite in Dhuhr and 'Aṣr with

﴿ وَالسَّمَاءِ ذَاتِ الْبُرُوجِ ۝١ ﴾

'By the heaven, holding the big stars.' (Surah al-Burūj),

And:

﴿ وَالسَّمَاءِ وَالطَّارِقِ ۝١ ﴾

'By the heaven, and al-Ṭariq (the night-comer, i.e. the bright star).' (Surah al-Ṭariq), and similar to them"².

This is reported by Abū Dāwūd too³.

¹ Nasā'ī (973).

² Nasā'ī (980).

³ Abū Dāwūd (805).

7 – Abū Dāwūd reported from Ibn 'Umar (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ), “The Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) prostrated in Dhuhr prayer, then he stood and bowed and so we saw that he recited Surah al-Sajdah”¹.

Recitation of Jum'ah Prayer

1 – Muslim reported from Abū Hurairah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who said, “Indeed I heard the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) recite those two on the day of Friday”², meaning *Surah al-Jum'ah* in the first unit and *Surah al-Munāfiqūn* in the second.

2 – Muslim also reported from al-N'umān b. Bashīr (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ), “The Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) used to recite in the two 'Eids, and in Jum'ah,

﴿سَبِّحْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ الْأَعْلَى﴾

‘Glorify the Name of your Lord, the Most High.’ (Surah al-A'la')

And:

﴿هَلْ أَتَاكَ حَدِيثُ الْغَاشِيَةِ﴾

‘Has there come to you the narration of the overwhelming (i.e. the Day of Resurrection),’ (Surah al-Ghāshiyah)³.”

¹ Abū Dāwūd (807).

² Muslim (877).

³ Muslim (878).

3 – Muslim also reported from al-N‘umān b. Bashīr (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) that he was asked, “What did the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) recite on Friday, other than Surah al-Jum‘ah?” So he said, ‘He used to recite

﴿ هَلْ أَتَاكَ حَدِيثُ الْغَاشِيَةِ ۝١ ﴾

‘Has there come to you the narration of the overwhelming (i.e. the Day of Resurrection)’” (Surah al-Ghāshiyah)¹

And Imam Aḥmad reported it with the wording, “With what did the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) used to recite in Jum‘ah alongside Surah al-Jum‘ah? He said,

﴿ هَلْ أَتَاكَ حَدِيثُ الْغَاشِيَةِ ۝١ ﴾

‘Has there come to you the narration of the overwhelming (i.e. the Day of Resurrection)’” (Surah al-Ghāshiyah)².

In the ‘Aṣr Prayer

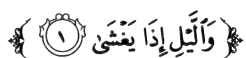
1 – The hadith of Abū Sa‘īd (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) has already preceded, reported by Muslim, “The Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) used to recite in each unit of the first two units of Dhuhr prayer the equivalent of thirty ayahs, and in the other two units the equivalent of fifteen ayahs – or he said, half of that (i.e. half of thirty, so

¹ Muslim (878).

² Aḥmad (4/277).

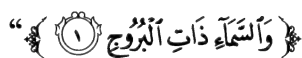
fifteen still), and in 'Aṣr in each unit of the first two units the equivalent of fifteen ayahs, and in the other two units half of that".¹

2 – The hadith of Jābir b. Samurah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) has also preceded, reported by Muslim and Abū Dāwūd, that he used to recite in it the likes of,



“By the night as it envelops.” (Surah al-Layl)²

3 – The hadith of Jābir b. Samurah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) reported by Nasā'ī and Abū Dāwūd has also preceded, “He used to recite in Dhuhr and 'Aṣr with



‘By the heaven, holding the big stars.’ (Surah al-Burūj)

And:



‘By the heaven, and al-Ṭāriq (the night-comer, i.e. the bright star).’ (Surah at-Ṭāriq), and similar to them”³.

¹ Muslim (452).

² Muslim (459 & 460) and Abū Dāwūd (806).

³ Nasā'ī (980) and Abū Dāwūd (805).

In the Maghrib Prayer

Bukhārī reported from Marwan bin al-Ḥakm who said, “Zaid b. Thābit said to me,

‘Why do you recite very short chapters (short of the *Mufaṣṣal* section) in the Maghrib prayer while I heard the Prophet (ﷺ) reciting the longer of the two long chapters?’”¹ [Al-A‘rāf & al-Mā‘idah, or al-A‘rāf & al-An‘ām].

Nasā’ī reported it with the wording, “Do you read in Maghrib with:

﴿قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ﴾

‘Say (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)) "He is Allāh, (the) One.’
(Surah al-Ikhlāṣ)

And:

﴿إِنَّا أَعْطَيْنَاكَ الْكَوْثَرَ﴾

‘Verily, We have granted you (O Muḥammad (ﷺ))
Al-Kawthar (a river in Paradise)” (Surah al-Kawthar)?’

He said, ‘Yes’. He said, ‘Upon an oath (I say to you), I saw the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) recite in it with the longer of the two long chapters.’”

¹ Bukhārī (764) and Abū Dāwūd (812).

“¹ ﴿الْمَصَّ﴾

Nasā'ī reported also from 'Ā'ishah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا),

“The Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) recited in Maghrib Surah al-'A'rāf, and he split it up into two[parts] over the two units [of prayer]”².

2 – Nasā'ī reported [from] 'Abdullah b. 'Utbah b. Mas'ūd,

“The Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) recited in Maghrib with ﴿حَمَّ﴾ Surah al-Dukhān”³.

3 – Bukhārī reported from Jubayr b. Muṭ'im (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who said,

“I heard the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) recite in Maghrib with Surah al-Ṭūr”⁴.

He mentioned an addition in another narration,

“So when he reached this ayah,

﴿أَمْ خُلِقُوا مِنْ غَيْرِ شَيْءٍ أَمْ هُمْ الْخَلْقُونَ﴾

To His statement,

﴿الْمُصِطَرُونَ﴾

¹ Nasā'ī (990).

² Nasā'ī (992).

³ Nasā'ī (989); and it is Mursal (there is a breakage in the chain).

⁴ Bukhārī (765).

My heart was about to fly away,” except Sufyān clearly mentioned that he narrated this addition from al-Zuhri and did not hear it from him¹.

4 – Bukhārī reported from Umm al-Faḍl Bint al-Ḥārith (رضي الله عنها) who said that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم),

“Used to recite in Maghrib with, ‘By the winds (or angels or the Messengers of Allāh) sent forth one after another.’ (Surah al-Mursalāt). Then (after that prayer) he did not lead us in any prayer till he died.”²

Nasāī mentioned that was in his house³.

So it is not a problem if a person elongates Maghrib sometimes, in fact it is suitable for him to recite the long chapters of the ‘Mufaṣṣal’ sometimes, as it is established from the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) that he recited in Maghrib with *Surah al-Tūr*, and *Surah al-A‘rāf* also, and split it into two [parts] over two units (two *Rak‘ah*). Therefore, it is not appropriate for Maghrib to always be with the short chapters of the ‘Mufaṣṣal’, rather the Sunnah is that you recite the longer chapters of the ‘Mufaṣṣal’ on some nights.

Ibn Ḥajr said in *Fath al-Bārī*⁴:

¹ Bukhārī (4854).

² Bukhārī (4429).

³ Nasāī (986).

⁴ *Fath al-Bārī* (2/248).

“I have not seen a connected chain of narration up to the Prophet (ﷺ) for a hadith particularly mentioning the recitation – i.e. for Maghrib – to be from the short chapters of the ‘*Mufaṣṣal*’ except for one hadith in Ibn Mājah from Ibn ‘Umar. He particularly mentioned *Surah al-Kāfirūn* and *Surah al-Ikhlāṣ*, and similar to it is reported by Ibn Ḥibbān from Jābir bin Samurah”. Then he mentioned the speech mentioned in relation to those two narrations and then said, “That which is preserved is that he read those Sūrahs in the two units after Maghrib.”

In the ‘Ishā Prayer

1 – Bukhārī reported from Abū Rāfi‘ who said, “Once I prayed the ‘Ishā prayer with Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) and he recited:

﴿ إِذَا السَّمَاءُ انشَقَّتْ ﴾

(*Surah al-Inshiqaq*) and he prostrated. I said, ‘What is that?’ He said, ‘I prostrated behind Abū al-Qasim (the Prophet) (when he recited that Surah) and I will keep on with this prostration while reciting it till I meet him.’”¹

2 – Bukhārī reported from Jābir (رضي الله عنه) who said, “Mu‘ādh b. Jabal (رضي الله عنه) used to pray with the Prophet (ﷺ) then go to lead his people in prayer. Once he led the ‘Ishā prayer and recited *Surah al-Baqarah*. Somebody left the prayer and Mu‘ādh criticized him. The news reached the Prophet

¹ Bukhārī (768).

(صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and he said to Mu'adh, 'You are putting the people to trial', and repeated it thrice."¹

And in one narration, "O Mu'adh, are you putting the people to trial?! Recite:

﴿وَالشَّمْسِ وَضُحَاهَا ۝١﴾

(Surah al-Shams)

And:

﴿سَبِّحْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ الْأَعْلَى ۝١﴾

(Surah al-'Ala) or the like."²

And in a narration reported by Nasā'ī he mentioned,

﴿إِذَا السَّمَاءُ انْفَطَرَتْ ۝١﴾

"When the heaven is cleft asunder." (Surah al-Infiṭār)³

And in another,

﴿اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ۝١﴾

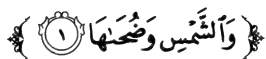
¹ Bukhārī (701).

² Bukhārī (6106)

³ Nasā'ī (998)

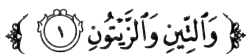
“Read! In the Name of your Lord, Who has created (all that exists),” (Surah al-‘Alaq)¹.

And he reported from Buraydah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ), “The Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) used to recite in ‘Ishā prayer with



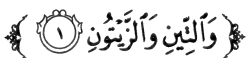
‘And by the sun and its brightness,’ (Surah al-Shams), and similar chapters to them.”²

3 – Bukhārī reported from al-Barā’ b. “Āzib (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ), “The Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) was on a journey and he recited in one of the first two units of the ‘Ishā prayer:



‘By the fig, and the olive,’ (Surah al-Tīn)³.

Nasā’ī reported it and said, “So he recited in the first unit of ‘Ishā:



‘By the fig, and the olive’ (Surah at-Tīn)⁴.”

This is what the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) used to recite specifically.

¹ Nasā’ī (999)

² Nasā’ī (1000).

³ Bukhārī (767).

⁴ Nasā’ī (1002).

If something occurs in the prayer that requires lightening of the prayer, then to lighten it is Sunnah. Bukhārī reported from Abū Qatādah (رضي الله عنه) from the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) who said,

“When I stand for the prayer, I intend to prolong it but upon hearing the cries of a child, I cut it short (lighten it) as I dislike to trouble the child’s mother.”¹

And it is permissible to split a chapter (*surah*) into two parts over two units (*rak'ah*), and the hadith of Zaid b. Thābit and 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها) has already preceded regarding the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) splitting *Surah al-A'rāf* over the two units of Maghrib.

It is also permissible to combine two chapters into one unit (*rak'ah*). Bukhārī reported from Anas (رضي الله عنه) who said,

“One of the *Anṣār* used to lead the *Anṣār* in prayer in the Quba mosque, and it was his habit to recite (after al-Fātiḥah):

﴿قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ﴾

(Say: He is Allāh the One) (*Surah al-Ikhlās*), whenever he wanted to recite something in the prayer. When he finished that *Surah*, he would recite another with it. He followed the same procedure in each unit. His companions discussed this with him and said, ‘You recite

¹ Bukhārī (707).

this *Surah* and do not consider it sufficient and so then you recite another. So either recite it alone or leave it and recite some other.' He said, 'I will never leave it and if you want me to be your *Imam* on this condition then it is alright, otherwise I will leave you.' They knew that he was the best amongst them, and they did not like for someone else to lead them in prayer. When the Prophet (ﷺ) went to them as usual, they informed him about it. The Prophet (ﷺ) addressed him and said, 'O so and so, what prevents you from doing what your companions request of you to do? Why do you recite this *Surah* especially in every unit?' He replied, 'I love this *Surah*.' The Prophet (ﷺ) said, 'Your love for this *Surah* will make you enter Paradise.'¹

He reported also from Ibn Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه) that he said, "I know the identical chapter (*Surah*) which the Prophet (ﷺ) used to recite in pairs." He then mentioned 20 *Mufaṣṣal* chapters (*Surahs*) including two chapters from the family of (i.e. those beginning with) ﴿ ۞ ﴾ (which the Prophet (ﷺ) used to recite) in each unit (*rak'ah*)².

Muslim reported from the hadith of Hudhayfah (رضي الله عنه) who said, "I prayed with the Prophet (ﷺ) one night, so he opened up the recitation with *Surah al-Baqarah* (after al-

¹ Bukhārī (774).

² Bukhārī (775).

Fātiḥah). So I said to myself, he will bow at 100 *ayahs*, but then he surpassed that, so I said to myself, he will complete it all in the prayer (half in the first unit and half in the second), but he surpassed that (i.e. continued reciting Surah al-Baqarah beyond the half of it). So I said to myself, he will bow at the end of it, (but he surpassed that and) opened up reciting Surah an-Nisā' and recited it all, then he opened up reciting Surah Āl 'Imrān and recited it all."¹

It is also permissible to repeat the same chapter over two units. The hadith reported by Abū Dāwūd has already preceded that the Prophet (ﷺ) recited,

﴿إِذَا زُلْزِلَتِ الْأَرْضُ زِلْزَالَهَا﴾

“When the earth is shaken with its (final) earthquake.”
(Surah al-Zalazah)

In both units of Fajr².

An Issue:

The placement of the feet whilst standing must be natural; meaning, he is not to join them nor spread them wide, because it is not mentioned from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he would spread them wide nor join them, and that which no description is mentioned in from the Messenger (ﷺ),

¹ Muslim (772).

² Abū Dāwūd (816).

then the origin is that the person remains upon his natural form.

The companions (رضي الله عنهم) used to join their ankles to the ankle of the one next to them in order to straighten the row, since the basis in the row is not the edges of the toes, rather the basis (for straightening) is the ankle, because the body is built upon the ankle. As for the tips of the toes then no consideration is given to that, since some people will have short feet and other people will have long feet, so if we were to base it on the tips of the toes and the foot of a man was big then it would necessitate him having to move backwards, and if his foot was small he would have to move forward in the row.

Therefore, the point of consideration is the ankle, the companions would join ankle to ankle to actualize the affair of straightening the row. Hence, joining ankle to ankle is a matter that is intended for a secondary purpose (i.e. straightening of the row), and not primarily just for the sake of joining them. That is why it is not mentioned from the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) that he used to widen the gap of the legs in an unnatural manner.

The Bowing (Rukū')

After finishing from the recitation he makes the *Takbīr* (*Allāhu Akbar*) whilst raising his hands just as he did in the opening *Takbīr*; Bukhārī reported from Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) the *Takbīr* in the rukū' and after it¹.

Muslim reported from Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) the raising of the hands with every descent and ascent (every time going down into rukū' or Sujūd, or sitting and rising from it)².

Bukhārī reported from Ibn 'Umar, "Allāh's Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) used to raise both his hands up to the level of his shoulders when opening up the prayer; and on saying the *Takbīr* for bowing, and on raising up his head from bowing he used to do the same and then say, 'Samī' Allāhu liman ḥamidahu Rabbana wa lakal-Ḥamd.' And he did not do that (i.e. raising his hands) in prostrations."³

And in one narration, "...but he did not do the same on prostrating and on raising up the head from it."⁴

¹ Bukhārī (789).

² Muslim (392).

³ Bukhārī (735).

⁴ Bukhārī (738).

The Physical Position in Rukū'

1. He extends and stretches his back straight so that it is not bent.
2. He positions his head level with his back: i.e. he is not to lower it or raise it, rather the back must be in line with his head.
3. He spreads his arms away from his sides.
4. He places his palms upon his knees, with fingers spread as he is grasping the knees.
5. The placement of his legs is as they were whilst standing (natural).

Bukhārī reported from Muḥammad b. 'Amr bin 'Aṭā' that he was sitting with a group of the companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) and he said we mentioned the prayer of the Prophet (ﷺ), so Abū Ḥumaid al-Sā'idī said, "I remember the prayer of the Prophet (ﷺ) better than any of you. I saw him raising both his hands up to the level of the shoulders on saying the *Takbīr*, and on bowing, he placed his hands on both knees, and bent his back straight, then he stood up straight from bowing till all the vertebrae returned to their natural positions. When he prostrated, he placed both his hands on the ground with the forearms away from the ground and away from his body, and his toes were facing the *Qiblah*. On sitting in the second unit, he sat on his left foot and propped up the

right one; and in the last unit he pushed his left foot forward, and kept the other foot propped up and sat over his buttocks.”¹

Muslim reported from the hadith of “Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها), “When he bowed he would not lower his back nor raise it, rather it would be in between that.”²

Nasā’ī reported from the hadith of Abū Mas‘ūd (رضي الله عنه) in his description of the Prophet’s prayer (صلى الله عليه وسلم), “So when he bowed he would place his palms on his knees, and he would place his fingers below that (palms on knees and fingers extending to bottom end of knee, over it), and he would spread out his elbows until everything was leveled from him.”³

Abū Dāwūd reported from the hadith of Abū Ḥumaid, “When he bowed, he would position his hands (holding firmly) onto the knees, and he would split between his fingers, then he would bend his back into straight position, without lowering his head or displaying his cheeks.”⁴

And in one narration, “Then he bowed and placed his hands on his knees as if he was grasping them, and he stretched out his hands firmly so that they would be separated away from his sides.”⁵

¹ Bukhārī (828).

² Muslim (498).

³ Nasā’ī (1037).

⁴ Abū Dāwūd (731).

⁵ Abū Dāwūd (734).

And he reported from the hadith of Rafa'ah b. Rāfi' (رَافِعُ بْنُ رَافِعٍ),
“And if you bow then place your palms on your knees, and
stretch your back.”¹

¹ Abū Dāwūd (859).

The Verbal Aspect of Rukū'

1 – He says while bowing: “سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الْعَظِيمِ” *Subhāna Rabbī al-‘Adhīm*. Abū Dāwūd reported from “Utbah b. ‘Āmir (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ), “When

﴿ فَسَبِّحْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الْعَظِيمِ ﴾

‘Then glorify with praises the Name of your Lord, the Most Great’ was revealed, the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said, ‘Make (i.e. say it) that in your rukū’.

And when

﴿ سَبِّحْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ الْأَعْلَى ﴾

‘Glorify the Name of your Lord, the Most High’ was revealed, he said, ‘Make (i.e. say it) that in your prostration.’”¹

Muslim reported from the hadith of Hudhayfah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) when he prayed with the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) that night, he said,

“Then he bowed and began saying “*Subhāna Rabbī al-‘Adhīm*”.”²

He repeats that three times and that is the minimum of perfection. Imam Aḥmad and Abū Dāwūd reported its amount as being three times³.

¹ Abū Dāwūd (869), Aḥmad (4/155) and Ibn Mājah (887).

² Muslim (772).

³ Abū Dāwūd (885) and Aḥmad (5/271).

The highest amount for the Imam is ten times, and for the one in congregation behind the Imam as many as he wishes. Abū Dāwūd and Imam Aḥmad reported from Sa'īd b. Jubayr and Anas b. Mālik (رضي الله عنه) regarding the amount of *Tasbīḥ* as being ten¹.

2 – The one praying can add on top of that what is mentioned from the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم):

a) Repeat,

سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَبِحَمْدِكَ اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي

'Subḥānak Allāhumma Rabbanā Wa Biḥamdika Allāhumma Ighfir Lī'.

Bukhārī reported from 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها) who said, "The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) used to say in his bowing and prostrating: *'Subḥānak Allāhumma Rabbanā Wa Biḥamdika Allāhumma Ighfir Lī'*"².

And in another narration, "He used to say frequently in his bowing and prostrating..."³

b) Repeat,

سُبُّوحٌ قُدُّوسٌ رَبُّ الْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالرُّوحِ

"Subbūḥun Quddūsun, Rabb al-Malā'ikah Wa al-Rūḥ".

¹ Abū Dāwūd (888) and Aḥmad (3/162).

² Bukhārī (794).

³ Bukhārī (817) and Muslim (484).

Muslim reported from 'Ā'ishah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا), "The Messenger of Allāh would say in his bowing and prostrating: "*Subbūhūn Quddūsun, Rabb al-Malā'ikah Wa al-Rūh*".¹

"*Subbūh*" is Allāh, and this is why we say that "*Subbūh*" is the predicate for an erased subject, the meaning being: You our Lord are *Subbūh* and *Quddūs*, Lord of the angels. The '*Rūh*' is Jibrīl, just as Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic said:

﴿ نَزَلَ بِهِ الرُّوحُ الْأَمِينُ ۝ ١٧٣ ﴾

"Which the trustworthy *Rūh* [Jibrīl (Gabriel)] has brought down." (al-Shu'arā: 193)

- c) That which Muslim reported from 'Alī (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) that when he used to bow he would say,

اللَّهُمَّ لَكَ رَكَعْتُ وَبِكَ آمَنْتُ وَلَكَ أَسْلَمْتُ وَعَلَيْكَ تَوَكَّلْتُ

أَنْتَ رَبِّي خَشَعَ سَمْعِي وَبَصَرِي وَخُجِّي وَعَظْمِي وَعَصَبِي

"*Allāhumma Laka Rak'atu Wa Bika Āmantu Wa Laka Aslamtu Wa 'Alayka Tawakkaltu Anta Rabbī Khasha'a Sam'ī Wa Basarī Wa Mukhī Wa 'Adhmī Wa 'Asabī*."²

3 – He increases and does much from the praise and glorification of Allāh the Mighty and Majestic in the bowing, just as the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said in that which is authenticated

¹ Muslim (487).

² Muslim (771).

from him, “Indeed I have been forbidden from reciting the Qur’ān whilst bowing or prostrating, so as for the bowing then glorify your Lord the Mighty and Majestic in it, and as for the prostration then strive to supplicate (make du‘ā) within it, since it is likely to be answered.”¹ Meaning, it is likely you will be answered if you supplicate to Allāh whilst in prostration.

The Qur’ān is not read during the bowing. Muslim reported from the hadith of ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said,

“Indeed I have been forbidden from reciting the Qur’ān whilst bowing or prostrating, so as for the bowing then glorify your Lord the Mighty and Majestic in it; and as for the prostration then strive to supplicate (make du‘ā) within it, since it is likely to be answered.”²

¹ Muslim (479).

² Muslim (479).

Rising from the Bowing

Then he raises his head and hands just as he raised them going into bowing and when doing the opening *Takbīr* (*Takbīr al-Ihrām*) whilst saying

سَمِعَ اللَّهُ لِمَنْ حَمِدَهُ

'Sami' Allāhu liman ḥamidahu.'

“Allāh answers to the one who praises Him.”

Bukhārī reported from Ibn 'Umar and Mālik b. al-Huwayrith (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) used to raise his hands when raising his head from bowing¹

Aḥmad reported from the ḥadīth of Rafa'ah (رضي الله عنه), “Then bow until you are at ease in bowing, then raise up until you are at ease in standing.”²

Ibn Mājah reported from the hadith of Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه),

“Then rise up until you are at ease in standing.”³

The meaning of *'Sami' Allāhu liman ḥamidahu'* is that Allāh answers to the one who praises Him, and the answering of Allāh to the one praising Him means Allāh rewards that person upon praising Him.

¹ Bukhārī (735).

² Aḥmad (4/340).

³ Ibn Mājah (1060).

When he is in an upright standing position he says,

رَبَّنَا وَلَكَ الْحَمْدُ

'*Rabbanā Wa Lak al-Ḥamd*' because whilst he is rising up he says, '*Sami*' *Allāhu liman ḥamidahu*'. Bukhārī reported from the hadith of Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) in his description of the Prophet's prayer, "(On rising from bowing he said) '*Sami*' *Allāhu liman ḥamidahu*' and then while standing straight he would say '*Rabbanā Wa Lak al-Ḥamd*', and in one narration, "*Wa Lak al-Ḥamd*".

And it is permissible to say,

رَبَّنَا لَكَ الْحَمْدُ

"*Rabbanā Lak al-Ḥamd*" without the 'Wa' 'و', and to say,

اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّنَا وَلَكَ الْحَمْدُ

'*Allāhumma Rabbanā Lak al-Ḥamd*', and to say, '*Allāhumma Rabbanā Wa Lak al-Ḥamd*'. All these four forms have been mentioned in the Sunnah from the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), so it is appropriate to say one form at one time, then another form another time, but not to say them all in one go.

Bukhārī reported from the Hadith of ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) that when the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) would raise his head from bowing he would say,

سَمِعَ اللَّهُ لِمَنْ حَمِدَهُ رَبَّنَا وَلَكَ الْحَمْدُ

¹ Bukhārī (789).

'Sami' Allāhu liman ḥamidahu Rabbanā Wa Lak al-Ḥamd'.¹

And he reported from Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) who said, "Allāhumma Rabbanā Wa Lak al-Ḥamd".²

Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) also narrated, "When the Imam says, 'Sami' Allāhu liman ḥamidahu' then say, 'Allāhumma Rabbanā Wa Lak al-Ḥamd'".³

Muslim reported from 'Abdullah b. Abū Awfa (رضي الله عنه), "Allāhumma Rabbanā Lak al-Ḥamd"⁴ And then he says after that,

مِلءَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمِلءَ الْأَرْضِ ، وَمِلءَ مَا بَيْنَهُمَا وَمِلءَ مَا شِئْتَ مِنْ
شَيْءٍ بَعْدُ أَهْلَ الثَّنَاءِ وَالْمَجْدِ ، أَحَقُّ مَا قَالَ الْعَبْدُ : وَكُلُّنَا لَكَ عَبْدٌ ،
اللَّهُمَّ لَا مَانِعَ لِمَا أَعْطَيْتَ ، وَلَا مُعْطِيَ لِمَا مَنَعْتَ ، وَلَا يَنْفَعُ ذَا الْجَدِّ
مِنْكَ الْجَدُّ

Milas Samawāti Wa Milal Arḍi Wa Mila Ma Baynahumā
Wa Mila Mā Shi'ta Min Shayin Ba'du Ahluth Thanā'ī Wal
Majd Aḥaqqu Ma Qālal 'Abdu Wa Kullunā Laka 'Abdun
Allāhumma Lā Māni'a Limā A'ṭayta Wa Lā Mu'ṭī Limā
Man'ata Wa Lā Yanfa' Dhal Jadd Minkal Jadd.

¹ Bukhārī (735).

² Bukhārī (795).

³ Bukhārī (722).

⁴ Muslim (476).

“O Allāh our Lord, to You is praise in all the Heavens and all the Earth, and all that pleases You to create afterwards. You are worthy of praise and glory, most worthy of what a slave says, and we are all Your slaves, no-one can withhold what You give or give what You withhold, and riches cannot avail a wealthy person against You.”

And Muslim reported from ‘Abdullah b. Abū Awfa (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ), “When the Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) used to raise his back from the bowing he used to say:

سَمِعَ اللَّهُ لِمَنْ حَمِدَهُ اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّنَا لَكَ الْحَمْدُ، مِلْءَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمِلْءَ الْأَرْضِ

، وَمِلْءَ مَا بَيْنَهُمَا وَمِلْءَ مَا شِئْتَ مِنْ شَيْءٍ بَعْدُ

Sami‘ Allāhu Liman Hamidahu Allāhumma Rabbanā Lakal Ḥamd Milas Samawāti Wa Mila Mā Baynahumā Wa Milal Arḍi Wa Mila Mā Shi’ta Min Shayin Ba’d.

“Allāh answers the one who praises Him, O Allāh our Lord, to You is praise in all the Heavens and all the Earth, and all that pleases You to create afterwards.” In one narration:

اللَّهُمَّ لَكَ الْحَمْدُ مِلْءَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمِلْءَ الْأَرْضِ، وَمِلْءَ مَا شِئْتَ مِنْ

شَيْءٍ بَعْدُ¹

Allāhumma Lakal Ḥamd Milas Samawāti Wa Milal Arḍi Wa Mila Mā Shi’ta Min Shayin Ba’d.

¹ Muslim (476).

“O Allāh, to You is praise in all the Heavens and all the Earth, and all that pleases You to create afterwards.”

Muslim also reported similarly from Abū Saʿīd (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) and added,

أَهْلَ الثَّنَاءِ وَالْمَجْدِ ، أَحَقُّ مَا قَالَ الْعَبْدُ : وَكُلُّنَا لَكَ عَبْدٌ ، اللَّهُمَّ لَا
مَانِعَ لِمَا أَعْطَيْتَ ، وَلَا مُعْطِيَ لِمَا مَنَعْتَ ، وَلَا يَنْفَعُ ذَا الْجَدِّ مِنْكَ
الْجُدُّ¹

*Ahluth Thanā Wal Majd Aḥaqqu Ma Qālal ‘Abd Wa
Kullunā Laka ‘Abd Allāhumma Lā Māni’a Limā Aṭayta
Wa Lā Muṭī Limā Man’ata Wa Lā Yanfa’ Dhal Jadd
Minkal Jadd.*

“You are worthy of praise and glory, most worthy of what a slave says, and we are all Your slaves, no-one can withhold what You give or give what You withhold, and riches cannot avail a wealthy person against You.”

مِلْءُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمِلْءُ الْأَرْضِ, meaning that ‘indeed You, our Lord, are deserving of a praise that fills the Heavens and the Earth and that which is between them, Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic is deserving of all the praise.’

As for the one being led in congregation behind the Imam, he says when rising up from bowing before becoming upright in

¹ Muslim (477).

standing “*Rabbanā Lak al-Ḥamd*” as opposed to , “*‘Sami’ Allāhu liman ḥamidahu*”, due to the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ), “And when he (the Imam) says ‘*Sami’ Allāhu liman ḥamidahu*’, so say, “*Rabbanā Lak al-Ḥamd*”. The one being led in congregation does not say when rising up, ‘*Sami’ Allāhu liman ḥamidahu*’.

It is permissible for the one praying to add to that which has been mentioned from the Messenger (ﷺ) in that position. Bukhārī and Nasā’ī reported from Rafā‘ah b. Rāfi‘ who said, “One day we were praying behind the Prophet (ﷺ). When he raised his head from bowing he said, ‘*Sami’ Allāhu liman ḥamidahu*’. A man behind him said,

رَبَّنَا وَلَكَ الْحَمْدُ حَمْدًا كَثِيرًا طَيِّبًا مُبَارَكًا فِيهِ

‘*Rabbanā Lak al-Ḥamd Ḥamdan Kathīran Ṭayyiban Mubārakan Fih.*’

‘O our Lord, all the praise and thanks are for You, many good and blessed praises.’”¹

Then he places his hands as he had them before the bowing, and some scholars said he releases his hands (down by his sides) and does not join them upon the chest, but they do not have any proof from the Sunnah of the Messenger (ﷺ).

¹ Bukhārī (799) and Nasā’ī (1063).

Some scholars said the person may choose, if he wishes he may do this or that, (return hands to the chest or if he chooses he can leave them down by the side).

And the ruling between people in any dispute is the Sunnah of the Messenger (ﷺ), and the Sunnah indicates that you do the same with your hands as you did before the bowing, i.e. join them together (upon the chest). The evidence is what

Bukhārī reported from Sahl b. Sa'd (رضي الله عنه) who said, "The people were ordered to place the right hand on the left forearm in the Prayer."¹

The angle of evidence from the hadith is from research and critical analysis. He said, "the man (person) is to place his right hand upon his left forearm during the prayer". This includes all of the prayer, excluded from it is what the Sunnah has made exception for, and that is during bowing, prostrating and sitting. Since in bowing the hands are placed upon the knees, and in prostration the hands are placed upon the ground, and when sitting they are placed upon the thighs or knees, so all that remains is the standing that is before the bowing and after the bowing, and all of that is under the general statement, "during the prayer".

Therefore, that which is closest to the Sunnah is that a person places his hands upon his chest after the bowing, just as he had

¹ Bukhārī (740).

them placed before the bowing, and the evidence is the hadith of Sahl b. S'ad (رضي الله عنه).

Point to Note: I have witnessed in the *Haram – al-Masjid al-Harām* – people who raise their hands up in a du'ā (supplication) type position after rising from the bowing, they have taken this from the *Qunūt* of the last unit, but due to their false analogy they have generalized this to the last unit and the unit that comes before it. However, this is wrong, there is no raising of the hands (into a supplication-type position) after rising from the bowing.

The Prostration

Then after he praises Allāh – the Mighty and Majestic – with that which is mentioned he descends down into prostration whilst saying the *Takbīr*. He says '*Allāhu Akbar*', and he is not to say '*Allāhu Akbar*' before, nor after, rather he is to say it as he descends down into prostration.

Bukhārī reported from Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) [the saying of] the *Takbīr* when going into prostration and other times of movement from one position to another in prayer¹.

And he does not raise his hands: Bukhārī reported from Ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) would not raise his hands when going into prostration, and neither when raising his head from prostration (into sitting position)².

And he is not to put them forward to the ground first, rather he descends upon his knees, then his hands, then his nose, so the first thing to reach the ground is the knees, then the palms, then the forehead and nose. This is the natural manner of descent into a prostration position, and similarly it is therefore also the manner prescribed in the Sunnah.

Nasā'ī and Abū Dāwūd reported from Wā'il b. Ḥujr (رضي الله عنه) who said,

¹ Bukhārī (789)

² Bukhārī (735)

“I saw the Prophet (ﷺ) when prostrating putting his knees down first before his hands.”¹

As for what Nasā'ī and Abū Dāwūd reported from Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

“When one of you prostrates then do not kneel down as the camel kneels down, let him place his hands before his knees.”²

So the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ), “Do not kneel like the camel kneels”, means upon the manner the camel kneels down, and when a camel kneels it puts down its hands (front legs) before its knees, as anyone who sees a camel knows this. So the camel goes down head first, and the front part of its body goes down before its back half, so it puts forward its hands.

The Prophet (ﷺ) forbade the person to descend into his prostration upon his hands, since if he does that he will be kneeling down (on his hands first) as the camel kneels down (on its front legs first when going down).

The human is in an elevated and noble position before Allāh, how can he resemble animals and put his hands before his knees? Resembling animals is not mentioned in the Qur'ān except in the context of dispraise,

¹ Abū Dāwūd (838) and Nasā'ī (1090).

² Abū Dāwūd (840) and Nasā'ī (1092).

﴿مَثَلُهُ كَمَثَلِ الْكَلْبِ﴾

‘So his description is the description of a dog’ (al-A‘rāf: 176).

﴿مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ خُمِلُوا التَّوْرَةَ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَحْمِلُوهَا كَمَثَلِ الْحِمَارِ يَحْمِلُ

أَسْفَارًا﴾

‘The likeness of those who were entrusted with the (obligation of the) Taurat (Torah) (i.e. to obey its commandments and to practice its legal laws), but who subsequently failed in those (obligations), is as the likeness of a donkey who carries huge burdens of books (but understands nothing from them).’ (Al-Jum‘ah: 5).

And in the Sunnah, “The one who takes back his gift (after giving it) is like the dog that vomits then returns to eat it.”¹

Therefore, ‘do not kneel down as the camel kneels down’, this is how the Prophet (ﷺ) mentioned the prohibition, because the person is forbidden from resembling animals, and especially in this circumstance (in the prayer before Allāh). Hence, when going into prostration the knees are put down first.

If someone says: If a person puts down his knees first then in reality he has imitated the camel since the knees of the camel

¹ Bukhārī (2589) and Muslim (1622).

are in its hands (front legs), and when the camel goes down it does so upon its knees.

We say: Yes, the knees of the camel are in its front legs, but the Messenger (ﷺ) did not say, “Do not kneel down upon that which the camel kneels down upon”. If he had said to not kneel down upon that which the camel kneels down upon, then we would have said: do not go down on your knees, since if you went down on your knees first you would be kneeling down upon what the camel kneels down on (the knees). Rather he said, “Do not kneel down as the camel kneels down”; the prohibition is upon the description of prostration, since he mentioned the ‘Kāf’, which indicates resemblance (in Arabic).

The prohibition is not upon the actual body part the person goes down into prostration upon, and descends upon. If the prohibition were upon the body part which a person goes down into prostration upon he would have said: “do not kneel down upon that (i.e. the particular body part) which the camel kneels down upon”.

Hence, the prohibition is upon the description, the manner and posture, not the actual body part which you go down into prostration upon; this difference is clear and apparent. The affair regarding this is very clear for the one who ponders, there is no need to tire ourselves over it, and that we try and say that the knees of the camel are in its hands (front feet), and that it kneels down upon them. We have adequacy (in not

requiring) this debate, since the prohibition is clear that it is regarding the posture and description not the body part that prostration begins upon.

So if someone says: the end of the hadith says: '...do not kneel down as the camel kneels down, and let him place his hands down before his knees', this is how the wording of the hadith is.

We say: if the final sentence was correct (and let him place his hands down before his knees) the hadith would be contradictory; since the end of it indicates that the hands should be put down first, whereas the beginning indicates the prohibition upon placing them down first. Due to this, the great scholar and expert in hadith Ibn al-Qayyim (رحمته الله) stated in "Provisions of the Hereafter" (1/223),

"Indeed his statement at the end of the hadith 'and let him place his hands down before his knees' was inverted by the narrator, because it does not conform with the beginning of the hadith, and if it does not conform to the beginning then we take the origin (initial basis of the hadith) and not the example. For indeed his statement, 'let him place his hands down before his knees', this is to illustrate. So if we were to return this to the origin then the correct statement would be, 'let him place his knees down before his hands', because if he put his hands down before his knees he would kneel down as the camel kneels down, since when a camel kneels down it puts its hands forth

first, and whoever sees a camel when it goes to the ground it will become clear to him.

Therefore, if we wish to have consistency in the hadith between its end and beginning the correct statement is, 'let him place his knees down before his hands', because if he placed his hands before his knees, as I said, he would be kneeling down as the camel kneels, and in that instance the end of the hadith would be contradictory to the beginning.

It is more appropriate we say that the narrator erred and the phrase was inverted – since he is human and may well err- and we do not say that the Messenger (ﷺ) was contradictory in his speech.

Based upon this, the Sunnah that the Messenger (ﷺ) commanded with when going into prostration is that the person places his knees down before his hands. [End of Ibn al-Qayyim's Words]

This is what ibn al-Qayyim (رحمته الله) determined and concluded, and I have mentioned that as supporting evidence not as a fundamental source evidence. That is because evidence is not primarily originated from the speech of the people of knowledge, rather it is used as supporting evidence. This is why they say: the speech of a scholar requires evidence upon it, not that it is the evidence itself. Meaning if a scholar makes a statement you say to him, 'what is your evidence?' As for making the speech of a scholar the base evidence itself upon

the servants of Allāh, then no, because a scholar may err (on occasion) and may be correct (on occasion). The commoner of course is commanded to ask the people of knowledge, and Allāh did not command him to ask the people of knowledge except that he takes what they say.

﴿فَسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ﴾

“So ask of those who know the Scripture [learned men of the Taurat (Torah) and the Injīl (Gospel)], if you know not.” (Al-Nahl: 43).

For this reason it is important to pay attention to this so that the hadith of Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) is in conformity to the hadith of Wā'il b. Hujr (رضي الله عنه) which indicates that the knees are placed down first when going into prostration, contrary to those who say it indicates that you place your hands down first and do not go down on your knees, because a camel when kneeling down does so upon its knees.

However, if someone is unable, or has pain in his knees or something of that nature, then there is no harm in placing the hands down first before the knees. Some of the brothers have written a treatise named “The Divine Facilitation In That The Knees Are Placed Before The Hands When Prostrating,” and they dealt with this issue proficiently and cited numerous benefits.

Physical Posture in Prostration

1 – He prostrates upon seven body parts: His forehead along with nose – these two are considered as one part, the nose is connected to the forehead and not independent – and the two hands, the two knees, and the tips of the toes; he must not raise even one of these parts, because Allāh has commanded us with that.

It is reported in Bukhārī from Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said,

“I have been commanded to prostrate on seven bones...” Then he detailed them in his statement, “On the forehead along with the top of the nose – and he pointed with his hand to his nose – and both hands, both knees and the toes of both feet, and not to gather the clothes or the hair.”¹

In another authentic wording, “We have been commanded to prostrate on seven bones.”²

In Muslim in one narration, “The palms” instead of “the hands”.³

Point to Note: Some people touch the ground with their thumbnail and the rest is raised (actual thumb is not in contact with the ground), so do you say: the thumb has touched the

¹ Bukhārī (812).

² Bukhārī (810).

³ Muslim (490).

ground or the thumbnail? This is wrong, and I am doubtful over the correctness of this, rather there must be some type of leaning upon it (i.e. actual thumb should be on the ground).

2 – He places his hands either:

- In line with his forehead and nose: That is mentioned in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim from the hadith of Wā'il b. Ḥujr (رضي الله عنه) in his description of the Prophet's (صلى الله عليه وسلم) prayer, “and when he prostrated he prostrated between his hands.”¹

And Abū Dāwūd reported from the hadith of Wā'il (رضي الله عنه), “and when he prostrated he placed his forehead between his hands.”²

- Or in line with his shoulders: Abū Dāwūd reported in one of the variations of the narration of Abū Ḥumaid (رضي الله عنه), “Then he prostrated and grounded his forehead and nose and distanced his arms from his sides, and he placed his hands in line with his shoulders.”³

Nasā'ī reported from the hadith of Wā'il, “He made the *Takbīr* and raised his hands (i.e. opening *Takbīr* of prayer), until I saw his thumbs close to his ears, and when he wanted to bow (*rukū'*) he made *Takbīr* and raised his hands, then he raised his head and said ‘*Sami' Allāhu liman Ḥamidahu*’ ‘Allāh answers the one who praises Him’, then

¹ Muslim (401).

² Abū Dāwūd (736).

³ Abū Dāwūd (734).

he made *Takbīr* and prostrated, and his hands relative to his ears were upon the place where he opened up with them in prayer (when doing opening *Takbīr*).¹

Therefore, the hands have two places, either they can be in line with the forehead and nose, and the prostration in between them, or they can be further back slightly in line with the shoulders.

3 – He spreads them (opened up, and not clenched as fists) on the ground.

4 – He extends his fingers toward the Qiblah direction all joined together; Abū Dāwūd reported from the hadith of Abū Ḥumaid (رضي الله عنه) in a narration, “When he prostrated he placed his hands neither spread out nor clasped together, and he faced the Qiblah with the tips of the fingers.”²

5 – He must settle into the prostration, meaning he makes it natural, so he does not over-extend his back nor bend it as some people do. You see some stretching their back until you say, “Is he lying down or prostrating?” The prostration does not require outstretching of the back, rather the back is raised until it is separated from the thighs; hence the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, “Be settled properly in the prostration.”³

¹ Nasā'ī (1103).

² Abū Dāwūd (732).

³ Bukhārī (532).

The stretching that some people do in prostration thinking it is Sunnah, is actually in opposition to the Sunnah, rather it is innovation, since they do that as an act of worship to Allāh, and the Sunnah has not mentioned it. Additionally, there is great difficulty in it upon a person, since if he stretches he will burden the weight of his body upon his forehead, his neck is squashed, and it is a great difficulty upon him.

The Sunnah is that you raise your back and separate it from your thighs, not that you outstretch it. There is a difference between stretching it and raising it, the Sunnah has not mentioned the fact that the person must stretch his back in prostration; rather it has mentioned the fact that he stretches his back in bowing (*rukū'*). In any case, if this was the Sunnah the person would have endured it but it is not the Sunnah.

6 – He raises and sets his arms (propped up), and does not lay them on the ground, nor on his knees. Abū Dāwūd reported from the hadith of Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه), “When one of you prostrates then do not lay your hands down as the dog lays them down, and join your thighs.”¹

Muslim reported from al-Barā (رضي الله عنه) who said: The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, “When you prostrate place your palms (down) and raise your elbows (up).”²

¹ Abū Dāwūd (901).

² Muslim (494).

7 – He separates the arms from the sides, except if you are in the row in the (congregational) prayer, then he does not do that, because if he did do that he would tighten the space upon the one next to him and harm him, and it is not appropriate to perform a prohibition to implement the Sunnah. However, when separating the arms from the sides the fingers are not to deviate in direction; they must remain facing the direction of the Qiblah.

In Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī from ‘Abdullah b. Mālīk b. Buhayna (رضي الله عنه) who said, “Whenever the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) prayed, he used to separate his arms from his body so widely that the whiteness of his armpits was visible.”¹

Muslim reported from Maymūnah (رضي الله عنها) who said, “When the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) would prostrate, if a calf or lamb wished to pass under him it could.”²

Nasā’ī reported: “When he prostrated he would separate his arms, to the extent that if a calf or lamb wished to pass under his arms it could.”³

Nasā’ī reported from the hadith of Abū Ḥumaid (رضي الله عنه), “When he went down into prostration he would separate his

¹ Bukhārī (390).

² Muslim (496).

³ Nasā’ī (1110).

arms from his armpits and he would open up the toes of his feet.”¹

8 – He raises his stomach away from his shins, so his back is raised.

9 – He raises his thighs away from his shins: Abū Dāwūd reported from the hadith of Wā'il b. Ḥujr (رضي الله عنه) in a narration: “When he prostrated he separated between his thighs without carrying anything from his stomach upon any part of them (i.e. no contact between thighs and stomach).”²

10 – He props his feet upright, and joins them together, and does not separate them, and the tips of the toes on the ground are to be facing the direction of the Qiblah. Some of the scholars said, he should lean on them to the best of his ability (put pressure on them into the ground) so that the tips of the toes are fixed facing the Qiblah, because some people may have a long big toe and short small toe, if he wanted to put the smallest toe onto the ground he is unable, (unless he applies some pressure).

Muslim reported from the hadith of 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها) who said, “I could not find the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) one night on the bed, so I searched for him, and so my hand fell upon the soles of his feet that were propped up whilst he was in the mosque (i.e. he

¹ Nasā'ī (1102).

² Abū Dāwūd (735).

was in prostration).”¹ And a single hand cannot fall upon both feet unless they are joined together.

And Nasā’ī reported, “And I ended up at him whilst he was in prostration and his two feet were affixed upright.”²

This is how it is also mentioned in Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Khuzaimah (1/328), that the Prophet (ﷺ) would join one foot to the other during prostration.

Some scholars said: The feet are not joined, rather they are placed in accordance to the (build of the) person, if the person is thin then he shortens the distance between them and if he has a large body he extends the gap slightly between them.

Some scholars said: The feet are not to be joined, rather he leaves the gap of a hand-span between them.

This claim comprises of two affairs:

The first thing: Separation (between the feet).

The second thing: That it is the size of a hand-span.

Hence, we now require two evidences: the first evidence is the evidence upon actual separation; the second evidence is the evidence upon it being the size of a hand-span.

A person may say that the evidence upon separating them is that the natural positioning of the feet is to have a slight gap,

¹ Muslim (486).

² Nasā’ī (1101).

as for joining them together than that is an additional matter on top out of the natural positioning.

So I say: they separate by way of natural positioning, as for the quantification of one hand-span then that requires evidence, because the principle is that everything that is claimed to have a specific qualification by number, or description, or size, then it is a necessity to have proof; otherwise it is a ruling without proof.

Hence, we say that the gap of a hand-span for the positioning of the feet requires a proof. As for opening them (leaving a slight gap in between), then a person may say that the evidence is the lack of evidence, since the origin or default in terms of natural positioning is that the legs or feet be separated just like the knees were separated (knees are not joined together in prostration).

However, what is closer to the Sunnah is that the feet are joined together.

As for that which relates to the knees, then the Sunnah as far as I know has not mentioned that they be joined or separated, therefore, he puts them upon their natural positioning, and does not join them together.

And he must not lay his arms down flat on the ground. Bukhārī reported from Anas (رضي الله عنه), "Be at ease in the

prostration properly, and do not put your forearms flat with elbows touching the ground like a dog.”¹

He is not to tuck up the clothes and hair: Bukhārī reported from Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, “We have been ordered to prostrate on seven bones and not to tuck up the clothes and hair.”²

Muslim reported, “The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was ordered to prostrate on seven bones, and was prohibited from tucking up his hair and clothes.”³

If the prostration becomes lengthy and it is difficult upon him to raise the hands it is permissible for him to lean (the weight) onto his knees, Abū Dāwūd reported from Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) who said, “The companions of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) complained regarding the difficulty in prostration if they separated the arms, so he said, “Seek help with the knees.”⁴

He is to make direct contact with the ground even if it is water and mud. Bukhārī reported from the hadith of Abū Sa‘īd (رضي الله عنه) regarding the vision of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) on the night of Decree, “I saw in my dream that I was prostrating in mud and water. In those days the roof of the mosque was made of branches and date-palm trees. At that time the sky was clear

¹ Bukhārī (532).

² Bukhārī (810).

³ Muslim (490).

⁴ Abū Dāwūd (902).

and no cloud was visible, but suddenly a cloud came and it rained. The Prophet (ﷺ) led us in the prayer and I saw the traces of mud on the forehead and the nose of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ). So it was the confirmation of that dream.”¹

And he is not to wipe the ground except if there is need. Bukhārī reported from Mu'ayqib (رضي الله عنه), “The Prophet (ﷺ) said about a man leveling the ground upon prostrating, ‘If you have to do so, then do it once (only)’.”²

It is allowed for him to prostrate on a cloth or something similar to that which is not connected to him. Bukhārī reported from Maymūnah (رضي الله عنها) the Prophet (ﷺ) praying upon a small mat (barely large enough for head and hands in prostration)³.

And he is not to prostrate on something connected to him whether a garment or otherwise except with need: Bukhārī reported from Anas (رضي الله عنه), “We used to pray with the Prophet (ﷺ) and some of us used to place the ends of their clothes at the place of prostration because of scorching heat.”⁴

¹ Bukhārī (813).

² Bukhārī (1207).

³ Bukhārī (381).

⁴ Bukhārī (385).

In another version of the narration, "...and if one of us could not put his face on the ground (because of the heat) then he would spread his clothes and prostrate over them".¹

Imam Aḥmad reported from Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه), "The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) used to pray in a single garment, covered with it, (and) he would guard himself against the (extreme) cold and heat of the ground with the spare ends of it."²

¹ Bukhārī (1208).

² Aḥmad (1/256).

The Verbal Statements in Prostration

1 – He says in prostration:

سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الْأَعْلَى

Subhāna Rabbī al-'Ala

'How perfect my Lord is, the Most High,' which he is to repeat three times – or more if he wishes, except the Imam who cannot do more than ten times as the maximum. The Prophet (ﷺ) used to praise in the name of His Lord the Most High in the prostration; that is established from him.

2 – He can add what has been mentioned (refer to the narrations that spoke of the supplications that can be read in both the bowing and prostration in the previous bowing section).

Muslim reported from Abū Hurairah that the Prophet (ﷺ) would say in his prayer,

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي ذَنْبِي كُلَّهُ ، دِقَّةً ، وَجِلَّةً ، وَأَوَّلَهُ ، وَآخِرَهُ ، وَعَلَانِيَتَهُ ،

وَسِرَّةً

Allāhumma Ighfir Lī Dhanbī Kullahu Diqqahu Wa Jillahu Wa Awwalahu Wa Ākhirahu Wa 'Alāniyatahu Wa Sirrahu.

“O Allāh forgive my sins, all of them, the fine of them and the broad, the first of them and the last, the apparent of them and the hidden.”¹

A Benefit

In the supplication of the bowing a person says, “سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الْعَظِيمِ” ‘*Subhāna Rabbī al-‘Adhīm*’ (How perfect is my Lord, the Supreme), and in the supplication of the prostration he says, “سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الْأَعْلَى” ‘*Subhāna Rabbī al-‘Ala*’ (How perfect is my Lord, the Most High). The wisdom in the difference of statements is clear; the *rukū‘* is bowing to Allāh for the greatness of Allāh, and that is a physical action. So if you say, “سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الْعَظِيمِ” that is a verbal action, so you are declaring the greatness of Allāh with physical action and verbal statement, this is greatly appropriate.

Prostration is subservience to Allāh; you place the most honorable part of you – the face – down at the place of the feet, the ground. This is subservience and subordination, so it is appropriate that you praise Allāh – the Mighty the Majestic – with highness. It is as if you are saying, ‘I am a subordinate servant, and you my Lord are the High Lord, and we know that the highness of Allāh is loftiness of His Essence as well as loftiness in attributes.’

¹ Muslim (483).

As for the loftiness in essence then Allāh is above everything in His Essence, and as for the loftiness in attributes, it means that His Attributes are inclusive of the loftiest of descriptions due to the statement of Allāh,

﴿وَلِلَّهِ الْمَثَلُ الْأَعْلَىٰ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ﴾

“And for Allāh is the highest description, and He is the Almighty, the All-Wise.” (Al-Nahl: 60)

An Issue:

A person prostrated, and he had two verses (*ayahs*) left of the section of the Qur’ān he had been reciting whilst standing, so he read them in the prostration; what is the ruling on that?

We say, this is not permissible, since the recitation of the Qur’ān in prostration is not permissible, just like the prayer at certain times of the day is not permissible. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, “Indeed I have been prohibited from reciting the Qur’ān whilst bowing or prostrating, so as for the bowing, then glorify the Lord the Mighty and Majestic in it, and as for the prostration then strive in supplication, as it is likely to be answered.”¹ Meaning it is likely to be answered for you, because you are the closest you may be to your Lord, as the

¹ Muslim (479).

Prophet (ﷺ) said, “The closest a servant is to his Lord is when he is in prostration.”¹

3 – He supplicates plentifully in prostration for himself and for his parents, and for whomsoever he wishes from the Muslims, for it is worthy of being answered. This is because he has placed his forehead – and that is the highest and most honorable part of his body – onto the ground that is tread upon by the feet. In that act is the perfection of subservience to Allāh, hence it is mentioned in the hadith of the Prophet (ﷺ),

“The closest a servant is to his Lord is when he is in prostration.”²

How perfect is Allāh, free from any imperfection! The standing person is higher up physically than the one prostrating, however since the prostrating one humbled himself to Allāh, Allāh raised him, and he consequently is closer to Allāh.

So it is appropriate that you make plentiful supplication in these prostrations, in the obligatory and supererogatory prayers, except if you are in congregation being led, in which case you must stick with the Imam and do not delay behind him (i.e. do not prolong the prostration after the Imam has already arisen from it).

¹ Muslim (482).

² Muslim (482).

And the person can make supplication for whatever he wishes as long as it is not a sin or cutting the ties of kinship. The youth can make supplication for marriage and say, 'O Allāh grant me a wife', whilst he is in prostration, and a student of knowledge may say, 'O Allāh increase me in knowledge, and grant me understanding and memorization.' Someone building a house may say, 'O Allāh aid me upon its completion'.

The point being, supplicate to Allāh with what you wish, since supplicating in and of itself is worship just as Allāh said,

﴿وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي

سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ﴾

“And your Lord said: ‘Invoke Me, [i.e. believe in My Oneness (Islamic Monotheism)] (and ask Me for anything) I will respond to your (invocation). Verily! Those who scorn My worship [i.e. do not invoke Me, and do not believe in My Oneness, (Islamic Monotheism)] they will surely enter Hell in humiliation!’” (Ghāfir: 60).

Regarding the supplication here – and in other parts of the prayer where it is legislated to supplicate – a person should ensure they read the prescribed supplications of the Sunnah, once he reads the prescribed supplications he can then supplicate for whatever else he wishes.

The Sitting Between the Two Prostrations

Then he raises his head from the prostration whilst saying the *Takbīr* (*Allāhu Akbar*) without raising his hands, and then he sits between the two prostrations the same length of time he had actually prostrated.

Bukhārī reported from Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه),

“Then he said *Takbīr* on prostrating and on raising his head from prostration.”¹

He also reported from Ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) with regards to raising the hands in prostration,

“And he does not do that when prostrating, and neither when rising up from the prostration.”²

And he reported from al-Barā (رضي الله عنه),

“The bowings, the prostrations, the period of standing after bowing, and the interval in sitting between the two prostrations of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) used to be equal in duration.”³

¹ Bukhārī (789).

² Bukhārī (735).

³ Bukhārī (801).

The Physical Posture of the Sitting in Between the Prostrations

1 – He lays down his left foot, meaning he makes his left foot a place of sitting upon.

2 – He affixes his right foot propped upright to his right side – not the shin or thigh, as they are left stretched out (on the ground and not raised up).

3 – He places the bottoms of his right foot's toes upon the ground and his heel facing upwards, as for his left foot, then the top is in contact with the ground and the sole is toward the person (i.e. he is sitting on the sole).

Bukhārī reported from 'Abdullah b. 'Abdullah b. 'Umar, "I saw 'Abdullah b. 'Umar crossing his legs while sitting in the prayer, and I – a mere youngster in those days – did the same. Ibn 'Umar forbade me to do so, and said, "The proper way is to keep the right foot propped up and behind the left in the prayer." I said questioningly, "But you are doing so (crossing the legs)." He said, "My feet cannot bear my weight."¹

Muslim reported from 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها) who said, "He would lay down his left foot and prop up his right foot."²

¹ Bukhārī (827).

² Muslim (498).

Nasā'ī reported from Ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنه), "From the Sunnah of the prayer is that you prop up the right foot, and face the toes of it to the Qiblah, and to sit on the left foot."¹

And if he wishes he can prop up both and sit (squat) on the heels of the two of them. Muslim reported from Ṭawūs, "We said to Ibn 'Abbās regarding sitting up (squatting) on the heels of both feet, and he said, 'It is Sunnah.' So we said to him, 'Indeed we see that as a shortcoming from a man.' Ibn 'Abbās replied, 'Rather that is a Sunnah of your Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم).'"²

4 – He places his left palm with fingers together on his left thigh, and if he wishes he can place them upon the knee as if he is grasping it.

5 – He places his right palm on his right thigh or the edge of this right knee (between the end of the thigh and the beginning of the knee), and he grasps (clenches) three fingers: the little finger, the one next to it and the middle finger, and places the thumb upon the knee. If he wishes he may clasp the small finger and the one next to it and join the tip of his middle finger with the tip of the thumb to create a circular shape and raise the index finger and move it during the supplication only, not continuously. Conversely, neither should he keep it motionless continuously, rather he points with it during the supplication. So he says for example, “ رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي ” ‘My Lord

¹ Nasā'ī (1159).

² Muslim (536).

forgive me', and raises his index finger with that, and says, "وَاِزْمِنِي" 'and have mercy upon me', and raises his index finger with that, and he says, "السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ", 'Peace be upon you', this is a supplication too so he raises his finger, "السَّلَامُ عَلَيْنَا" 'Peace be upon us', is a supplication,

"اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ" 'O Allāh send salutations upon Muḥammad' is supplication, "اللَّهُمَّ بَارِكْ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ" 'O Allāh send blessings upon Muḥammad' is a supplication, "أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ عَذَابِ جَهَنَّمَ" 'I seek refuge in Allāh from the Punishment of the Fire' is a supplication, and

"مِنْ عَذَابِ الْقَبْرِ" 'I seek refuge in Allāh from the punishment of the grave'. Similarly, "مِنْ فِتْنَةِ الْمَحْيَا وَفِتْنَةِ الْمَمَاتِ" 'from the trials of life and death. Similarly, "مِنْ فِتْنَةِ الْمَسِيحِ الدَّجَالِ" 'from the trial of the anti-Christ Dajjāl' and so on. Every time a supplication section comes up, he moves his index finger as an indication upon the highness of Allāh - the one who he is calling upon.

Muslim reported from 'Abdullah b. 'Umar (رضي الله عنه), "That when the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) used to sit in prayer, he would place his hands upon his knees, and he would raise his right index finger, and he would supplicate with it, and his left hand [would be] outspread upon his knee."¹

¹ Muslim (850).

And similarly, "He placed his right hand on his right thigh, and he clenched all of its fingers and pointed with his index finger, and he placed his left hand upon his left thigh."¹

Muslim reported from the hadith of 'Abdullah b. al-Zubayr (رضي الله عنه),

"When the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) sat to supplicate, he would place his right hand upon his right thigh, and his left hand upon his left thigh, and he would point with his index finger, and he would place his thumb upon his middle finger, and he would grasp his left knee with his left hand."²

Aḥmad reported from Wā'il b. Ḥujr (رضي الله عنه) who said, "I came to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and said (to myself), 'I will look at how he prays.' He said, 'He faced the *Qiblah* and made the *Takbīr* (*Allāhu Akbar*), and raised his hands until they were level with his shoulders, then he took his left with his right, and when he wanted to go into bowing he would raise his hands until they were level with his shoulders, and when he bowed he placed his hands upon his knees, and when he raised his head from the bowing he raised his hands until they were level with his shoulders, and when he prostrated he placed his hands level with his face, in that place"³.

¹ Muslim (850).

² Muslim (879).

³ Aḥmad (4/316).

In another narration, "He prostrated and placed his hands level with his ears, then he sat and lay down his left foot, then he placed his left hand on his left knee, and he placed his right arm on his right thigh, then he pointed with his index finger, and placed his thumb upon his middle finger and clenched the remainder of the fingers. Then he prostrated, and his hands were level with his ears."¹

In another narration, "Then he clenched his fingers and made a circle, then he raised his (index) finger, and I saw him moving it supplicating with it."² Abū Dāwūd reported a similar narration.³

Those who annotated (added the checking of the narrations) onto (the book) "Provisions for the Hereafter" (of Ibn al-Qayyim) mentioned that the hadith is authentic, and some phrased it as 'good'.

What I have mentioned here is what Ibn al-Qayyim mentioned in "Provisions for the Hereafter"⁴.

The restriction of that to the *tashahhud* (sitting) does not mean it is not general to the whole prayer, since the stronger statement from the statements of the scholars of Principles (*Uṣūl al-fiqh*) is that if a generalized matter is mentioned, then

¹ Aḥmad (4/317).

² Aḥmad (4/318).

³ Abū Dāwūd (726).

⁴ Provisions for the Hereafter (1/238).

one of the specifics is mentioned with a ruling that is in conformity to it, then that does not necessitate specification, as the scholars of Principle have definitively mentioned. This is the statement of the majority of them. So for example, if you said, 'Honor the students', and I have for example 20 students, then you said, 'Honor such and such' and he is one of the 20, this would not necessitate that the remaining 19 cannot be honored. Just as when Allāh the Most High said:

﴿ نَزَّلَ الْمَلَكُ وَالرُّوحُ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ مِنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ ﴾

"Therein descend the angels and the Rūḥ [Jibrīl (Gabriel)] by Allāh's Permission with all Decrees." (al-Qadr: 4),

The mentioning of the 'Rūḥ' (Gabriel) does not dictate the exclusion of the remainder of the Angels.

The point being, mentioning some of the units (sub-sections) of something more general with a ruling that is in conformity to the general does not necessitate specification (of that unit to the ruling). Rather, the specific mentioning of that particular unit may be that for some reason it necessitates such as particular importance given to that unit or other than that.

Most of the scholars are upon the opinion that the (right) hand is to be outspread (i.e. not clenched as described for the *tashahhud*), but you are not able to establish that the Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) used to outspread his hand upon his thigh. And

whomsoever from you comes across the Sunnah that the right hand is to be outspread upon the right thigh between the two prostrations then enlighten us with it, because I searched for it and I did not find that it should be outspread, and in that case if it is not to be outspread then the Sunnah has mentioned that it is to be clasped. Indeed, following the Sunnah is superior, even if the scholars of Fiqh – may Allāh have mercy upon them – say, ‘it is placed upon the thigh outspread’. Suffice for us to say, the description that has been mentioned regarding the right hand is that it is clasped, and it is not mentioned that it is left outspread, hence it remains upon this description until it becomes clear to us from the Sunnah that it is to be outspread in the sitting between the two prostrations.

I used to previously say, that the sittings in the prayer are three: between the two prostrations, the first *tashahhud* sitting, and the last *tashahhud* sitting. Each of these sittings differ from the other, the final sitting is different to the first *tashahhud* (in a three-unit or four-unit prayer, since obviously in a two-unit prayer there is only one sitting for *tashahhud* at the end), in so far as it is the ‘*tawarruk*’ position of sitting (left leg under the body, sitting on the buttocks and right foot propped up), whereas the first sitting is ‘*iftirāsh*’ (sitting on the actual left foot and right propped up), and the placement of the hands is the same in both.

As for the sitting between the two prostrations then it is in conformity to the first *tashahhud* sitting in so far as it is an

'*iftirāsh*' sitting position (as described previously), however it differs with respect to the right hand being placed on the thigh outspread (not clasped) just like the left.

However, after I came across what Wā'il b. Hujr (رضي الله عنه) narrated, there was no leeway for me except to follow what is indicated by the hadith, even if the initial reasoning that I used to lean toward and say was a sound reasoning, but as long as the Sunnah indicates that the placement of the right hand in the sitting between the two prostrations is the same as the two tashahhud sittings (i.e. clasped with finger positionings as previously described) then there is no leeway for me with Allāh except to say that.

The Verbal Statements for the Sitting in Between the Two Prostrations

He says,

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي ، وَارْحَمْنِي ، وَاهْدِنِي ، وَاجْبُرْنِي وَعَافِنِي ، وَارْزُقْنِي

Rabbigh Fir Lī Warḥamnī Wajburnī Wa 'Āfīnī Warzuqnī.

‘O Allāh forgive me, have mercy upon me, and guide me, enrich me, give me health, and grant me sustenance.’ Whether he is the Imam, or in congregation being led by the Imam, or praying alone, this is a blessed successful supplication.

And if you said, how can the Imam state the supplication in first person tense thereby specifying himself? Since it has been narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, “Let not one of you have ‘Āmīn’ said upon a supplication you specify to yourself alone, whosoever does that has betrayed them (i.e. the congregation saying Āmīn to you).”¹

The answer to that is, that this is in relation to a supplication where the congregation (those being led in prayer whether small or large in number), say ‘Āmīn’ upon it. In that case, if the Imam singles out the pronouns (hence specifying the supplication to himself) then he has betrayed those being led by him.

¹ Abū Dāwūd (90), Tirmidhī (357), Ibn Mājah (923) and Aḥmad (5/280).

For instance, the *Qunūt* supplication, the Prophet (ﷺ) taught al-Hasan b. 'Alī (رضي الله عنه) in the singular form,

اللَّهُمَّ اهْدِنِي فِيمَنْ هَدَيْتَ

Allāhummahdinī Fī Man Hadayta.

‘O Allāh guide me along with those whom You have guided’.¹

So if the Imam were to read it as اللَّهُمَّ اهْدِنِي فِيمَنْ هَدَيْتَ, it would be betrayal, because the congregation will say ‘*Āmīn*’ and yet the Imam has made supplication only for himself and left out the congregation.

Therefore, he must say, اللَّهُمَّ اهْدِنِي فِيمَنْ هَدَيْتَ (plural pronoun) ‘O Allāh guide us along with those whom You have guided’, so that he does not specify himself only at the exclusion of the congregation behind him – who will be saying ‘*Āmīn*’ to it – since that would then be betrayal of them.

If someone said let the Imam say it in the singular pronoun form, and we can tell the congregation to say, “And I too, the same as you,” then we say this is not correct, because what is legislated for the one being led is to say ‘*Āmīn*’ only, hence a form that is inclusive must be said (by the Imam).

¹ Abū Dāwūd (1427), Tirmidhī (464), Nasāī (1746), Ibn Mājah (1178), and Aḥmad (1/199).

Abū Dāwūd reported from Ibn 'Abbās, "The Prophet (ﷺ) used to say between the two prostrations,

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَارْحَمْنِي وَعَافِنِي وَاهْدِنِي وَارْزُقْنِي

Allāhummagh Fir Lī Warḥamnī Wa 'Āfinī Warzuqnī.

'O Allāh, forgive me, and have mercy upon me, and grant me health, and guide me, and grant me sustenance'.¹

And he reported from the hadith of Hudhayfah (رضي الله عنه) that he used to say,

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي ، رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي

'O my Lord, forgive me, O my Lord, forgive me'.²

Aḥmad reported from Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه),

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي ، وَارْحَمْنِي ، وَارْفَعْنِي ، وَارْزُقْنِي ، وَاهْدِنِي

Rabbigh Fir Lī Warḥamnī Warf'anī Warzuqnī Wahdinī.

'O my Lord, forgive me, and have mercy upon me, and raise me, and grant me sustenance, and guide me'.³ And in one narration he added, "وَاجْبُرْنِي", 'and enrich me' (in completing my deficiencies).⁴

¹ Abū Dāwūd (850).

² Abū Dāwūd (874).

³ Aḥmad (1/315).

⁴ Aḥmad (1/371).

'*Rabbighfir Lī*' 'O my Lord forgive me', forgiveness comprises of seeking two affairs: concealment and overlooking. It is derived from "*al-Mighfar*" 'helmet', and that is what a fighter wears in battle to protect his head from arrows, and this helmet provides (firstly) a covering, a concealment, and secondly, protection.

Therefore, '*Rabbighfir Lī*' means conceal and cover my sins so that no-one becomes aware of them except You – because a person does not like that the people become aware of what he has done from sins – and also overlook them and so do not hold me accountable upon them.

As for your statement, '*Irḥamni*', have mercy upon me', its meaning is decree for me mercy in which there is by way of it attainment of the good objectives and disappearance of that which is feared.

"*Āfinī*" means grant me good health, from physical and non-physical illness, physical being in the body and non-physical being in the heart (diseases of the heart), and we ask Allāh for safety from the two affairs.

"*Ujburnī*" means 'enrich me', meaning make up my shortcomings, because a person is always in deficiency; either he may be lax in an obligation, or he may perform a prohibition. So you ask Allāh to make up your shortcomings. Similarly, a person is deficient in his knowledge, deficient in his memorization, he always learns things then forgets, so you ask Allāh to make up all the deficiencies that come upon you.

"*Urzuqni*" means 'grant me sustenance', in other words, monetary sustenance which provides sustenance of the body by way of it, and spiritual sustenance which, by way of it, provides sustenance of the heart.

Monetary sustenance [is that] which provides physical sustenance for the body such as food and drink, clothes and a home, and spiritual sustenance such as *īmān* (faith), knowledge, righteous actions, and other than that which benefits a person in his Hereafter.

In most cases for the people, a person says this supplication yet does not perceive that he is asking for the two types of sustenance when he says it; the physical monetary sustenance as well as the spiritual sustenance of the heart, and that which is appropriate for us is to remember these meanings so we gain reward and virtue from it.

The Second Prostration

Then he makes the *Takbīr* (*Allāhu Akbar*) and goes into the second prostration, and the manner of the second prostration is as the first was, and what is said in it is the same as what was said in the first one.

Bukhārī reported from Abū Hurairah, "Then prostrate calmly until you feel at ease, and then raise your head and sit with

calmness till you feel at ease, then prostrate with calmness until you feel at ease in prostration...”¹

And he reported from Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه), “He used to say *Takbīr* on prostrating and on raising his head from prostration...”²

¹ Bukhārī (793).

² Bukhārī (789).

The Second Unit (Rak'ah)

Then he makes the *Takbīr* and rises up for the second unit upon the soles of his feet pressing up on his knees without (pausing and) sitting (hence, straight up), this is the famous opinion from the school of Imam Aḥmad.¹

It has also been said that he should (momentarily) sit, and then rise pressing up on his hands, as it is famously mentioned from the school of Imam al-Shāfi'ī.²

This (momentary) sitting is famous amongst the scholars with a name, and it is the 'sitting of rest', (*jalsah al-istirāḥah*), and the scholars have differed over its legislation.

From among them are those who view it as recommended absolutely (in all times and circumstances), so when you stand up for the 2nd unit, or for the 4th unit, sit (momentarily after coming out of the second prostration) then press up on your hands and rise up, either (with your hands) upon the form of someone kneading dough – if the hadith is authenticated regarding that – or upon a different form among those who consider this hadith of the 'kneading dough' description weak.

However, some from among them view that it is absolutely not recommended at all.

¹ *Muntaha al-Irādāt* (1/58).

² *Mughnī al-Muhtāj* (1/171).

And some from among them give more detail and say, if you require it – perhaps due to the difficulty of rising up flat on your feet because of old age or illness or something similar – then you can sit momentarily then rise up, but if you do not require that for any reason then do not sit, (rise straight up).

An evidence to support that this sitting is not recommended, is that it does not have any particular supplication, and neither does it have a *Takbīr* when rising from it, rather it is only one *Takbīr* from prostration up to the standing position, so because there is no *Takbīr* either before it or after it, and neither any supplication in it, this indicates that it is not intended in of itself (as an independent act of worship).

Every pillar that is intended in and of itself must have some legislated remembrance and a *Takbīr* prior to it, and one after it. They said that is also indicated by the fact that in the hadith of Mālik b. al-Huwayrith (رضي الله عنه) it says, “He leans on his hands (supports himself on his hands in rising up).”¹

Supporting oneself on the hands is usually not done except if there is a need, or heaviness of body due to which he cannot rise up otherwise. Due to this we say, if you require it then do not burden yourself in attempting to rise up instantly from the prostration into standing, and if you do not require it then it is better to rise up from the prostration into standing instantly.

¹ Bukhārī (824).

This is what the author of 'Mughnī' 'Abdullah b. Aḥmad b. Qudāmah - the one known as al-Muwaffaq - also chose¹ (as his opinion), and he is from the senior companions of Imam Aḥmad. This is also the choice of ibn al-Qayyim in 'Provisions for the Hereafter'². The author of al-Mughnī says, "This is what the evidences come together in, the evidences that have affirmation and negation of this sitting, and this distinction is stronger as far as I am concerned than leaving it open absolutely.

The opinion that it is not legislated at all is weak as far as I am concerned, because the narrations (*aḥādīth*) regarding it are established.

Bukhārī reported from Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه), "He would say *Takbīr* upon prostrating and upon raising his head."³

And Bukhārī reported from Abū Hurairah, "And then recite what you know from the Qur'ān, and then bow with calmness till you feel at ease, then rise from bowing, till you stand straight, and then prostrate calmly, (and remain in prostration) till you feel at ease, and then raise (your head), and sit with calmness till you feel at ease in the sitting position, and do likewise in the whole of your prayer."⁴

¹ *Al-Mughnī* (2/213).

² Provisions for the Hereafter (1/241).

³ Bukhārī (789).

⁴ Bukhārī (6251).

Bukhārī reported from Mālik b. al-Huwayrith (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ), “I saw the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) offering prayer and in the odd units¹ he used to sit for a moment before getting up.”²

In another narration it mentioned he prayed with them [i.e. led them] the prayer of the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), “And when he raised his head from the second prostration he would sit for a while and then support himself on the ground and get up.”³

Nasā'ī reported that he (Mālik b. al-Huwayrith) used to show them how the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) used to pray and mentioned, “...and when he raised his head from the second prostration he would sit up straight, then he would support himself on the ground and rise up.”⁴

In Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī from the hadith of 'Ā'ishah, “I never saw Allāh's Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) offering the night prayer while sitting except in his old age and then he used to recite while sitting and whenever he wanted to bow he would stand up and recite thirty or forty verses (while standing) and then bow.”⁵

It is mentioned within it, “When he became old, he offered prayer while sitting, but if he wanted to perform a bowing, he

¹ Meaning at the end of the 1st and 3rd units.

² Bukhārī (823).

³ Bukhārī (824).

⁴ Nasā'ī (1154).

⁵ Bukhārī (1118).

would get up, recite (some other verses) and then perform the bowing.”¹

In Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, “When the Messenger (ﷺ) became old the majority of his prayer was sitting down.”²

Muslim reported from the hadith of Ḥafṣah (رضي الله عنها), “I never saw the Messenger (ﷺ) pray his supererogatory prayer sitting, until before his death by a year, when he used to pray his supererogatory prayer sitting.”³

In another narration, “By a year or two”.

In the Musnad of Aḥmad from Mu‘āwīyah that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, “Do not go ahead of me in bowing or prostration, for no matter how much I go ahead of you when I go into bowing you will be on par with me when I rise up, and no matter how far ahead I go, when I go into prostration you will be on par with me when I rise up, indeed I have become old.”⁴ Al-‘Irāqī (scholar of hadith) said: The men in the chain are the narrators of the Ṣaḥīḥ (Bukhārī).

Then he prays the second unit just like the first, but without the opening supplications, because the place for the opening supplications is at the beginning of the (first) unit and that is

¹ Bukhārī (4837).

² Muslim (732).

³ Muslim (733).

⁴ Aḥmad (4/92).

why it is known as the opening supplication, because the prayer is opened up with it.

As for the *ta'awwudh* (seeking refuge in Allāh) before the recitation in the second unit, as well as the third and fourth units, then the scholars have differed regarding it. Some of them view that the *ta'awwudh* should be said in every unit based upon the fact that the recitation of every unit is unique and independent from the previous unit, but some view that the initial *ta'awwudh* in the first unit is sufficient, since the recitation of the whole prayer is connected in all the units (Rak'ah) (i.e. it is all one worship together).

I am not aware of any Sunnah that distinguishes between the two opinions, but if he does seek refuge in Allāh from the Shayṭān (*ta'awwudh*) in the second, third and fourth unit then there is no issue in that, and if he leaves it there is no issue either.

Muslim reported in his Ṣaḥīḥ from Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه), "When the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) would rise up from the second unit he would open his recitation with:

﴿الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾

(All the praises and thanks be to Allāh, the Lord of the 'Alamin (mankind, jinn and all that exists) (al-Fātiḥah:2)

And he would not be silent (i.e. prior to beginning that, indicating that there was no *ta'awwudh*)¹

This (second) unit is to be shorter than the first.

Bukhārī reported from Abū Qatādah (رضي الله عنه), “And he used to prolong the first unit more than the second...”²

In another narration, “The Prophet (صلی الله عليه وسلم) used to prolong the first unit of the Dhuhr prayer and shorten the second one, and he used to do the same in the morning (Fajr) prayer.”³

¹ Muslim (599).

² Bukhārī (776).

³ Bukhārī (779).

The First *Tashahhud* (Sitting)

Then he sits for the *tashahhud* after two units of prayer, his hands in the same position as when he sat in between the two prostrations, as well as his legs being the same as that, except in the case of the ‘squat’ (*Iq‘ā*, both feet propped) position. He places his hands upon his thighs just as he placed them during the sitting in between the two prostrations; refer to the section regarding sitting in between the two prostrations.

Muslim reported from the hadith of ‘Ā’ishah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا): “He used to say the *tashahhud* in every two units”.¹

In Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī from the hadith of Abū Ḥumaid (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) that “...when the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) would sit after two units he would sit on his left leg and prop up his right foot”.²

Then he would say,

التَّحِيَّاتُ لِلَّهِ وَالصَّلَوَاتُ وَالطَّيِّبَاتُ ، السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ وَرَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ
وَبَرَكَاتُهُ ، السَّلَامُ عَلَيْنَا وَعَلَى عِبَادِ اللَّهِ الصَّالِحِينَ أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ
وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

Attahīyāt lillāhi Waṣ Ṣalawātu Waṭ Ṭayibātu Assalāmu
‘Alayka Ayyuhan Nabīyyu Wa Raḥmatullāhi Wa
Barakātahu Assalāmu ‘Alaynā Wa ‘Ala ‘Ibādillahiṣ Ṣāliḥīn

¹ Muslim (498).

² Bukhārī (828).

Ashhadu An Lā Ilāha Illallāh Wa Ashhadu Anna Muḥammadan Rasūlullāh.

“All the compliments and best regards prayers, and good things are due to Allāh. Peace be upon you, O Prophet, and Allāh’s mercy and blessings be on you. Peace be upon us and the true pious worshippers of Allāh).”

Bukhārī reported from ‘Abdullah b. Mas‘ūd (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said,

“When one of you sits in prayer then say, ‘All the compliments and....’ and he mentioned the whole thing.”¹

Muslim reported it with the wording, ”فعد”. (Essentially indicating the same meaning; to sit).

“*Al-taḥīyāt*”: The people of knowledge said: The ‘*taḥīyāh*’ is every word that denotes the greatness of the one being addressed, so the meaning of ‘*Al-taḥīyāt lillāh*’ is that all forms of greatness are for Allāh, deservedly and specifically, so Allāh is deserving of the praise and greatness, and He is specified with the greatness in which no one resembles Him.

“*Al-Ṣalawāt*”: That is the known prayer, all the five prayers and *Jum‘ah* (Friday) prayer, Witr, as well the supererogatory and other than them. All the prayers, no one is worthy of them except Allāh the Mighty and Majestic, and the first prayer that

¹ Bukhārī (6230).

enters into that is the actual prayer you are praying now (at the time of saying this supplication).

“*Al-Ṭayibāt*”: They are the beautiful descriptions that Allāh the Mighty and Majestic is attributed with, (in addition it means) the goodness that we perform. Hence, the ‘*Ṭayibāt* to Allāh’ are the beautiful descriptions and characteristics that are for Allāh, just as the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

“Indeed Allāh is Ṭayyib and does not accept anything except the Ṭayyib (all of that which is good).”¹

Every good from statements and actions or attributes, then it is for Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic. Allāh speaks the truth and guides to the straight path. Similarly, Allāh accepts the ‘*Ṭayibāt*’ (goodness) from us to Him. As for the evil and debase affairs then Allāh will not accept them due to the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ), “Indeed Allāh is Ṭayyib and does not accept anything except the Ṭayyib (all of that which is good).”²

"*Assalāmu 'Alayka Ayyuha al-Nabiyyu.*" *as-Salām* is a name from the names of Allāh, just as Allāh said,

﴿الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ﴾

‘The King, the Holy, the One Free from all defects...’
[Al-Ḥashr: 23]

¹ Muslim (1015).

² Muslim (1015).

And the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Indeed Allāh is as-Salaam."¹

However, here in this place it is not a name from the names of Allāh, the intent behind *al-Salaam* here is *Taslīm*, in other words, the peace of Allāh upon you. Meaning that Allāh safeguards you, O Prophet, from every evil, and safeguards the legislation from every evil, since in the preservation of the *Sharī'ah* (divine legislation) of the Messenger (ﷺ) is safeguarding of him too.

The evidence that safeguarding of the legislation is a safeguarding of the Prophet (ﷺ) is that if a person was to make a statement, and the people started abusing this statement, the abuse of the statement would in effect be abuse of the one who said it too. So when you say, 'Peace be upon you O Prophet', you are supplicating to Allāh to safeguard him and his legislation (from abuse or wrongdoing).

We said, '*Salām*' here means '*Taslīm*' i.e. peace of Allāh be upon you, so can the Arabic pattern of words upon the scale of '*fi'āl*' have the meaning of the words upon the scale '*tafīl*'? (as suggested here)?

The answer is yes. For instance, the word '*kalām*' can have the meaning of '*taklīm*' (to speak to); hence '*Salām*' has the meaning of '*Taslīm*', peace from Allāh upon you O Prophet. So you are asking Allāh to safeguard His Prophet (ﷺ)

¹ Bukhārī (831).

and to safeguard his legislation from every deficiency and shortfall.

There is an issue in your statement “*Alayka*’, ‘upon you’, from two angles:

1 – How can it be correct that he is addressed in the prayer directly, since he is from the humans, and the Prophet (ﷺ) has stated, “Indeed this prayer, no speech of humans (addressing anyone besides Allāh) is correct within it.”¹

We say: addressing the Prophet (ﷺ) here is an exemption from his statement, “Indeed this prayer, no speech of humans (addressing anyone besides Allāh) is correct within it”, hence the scholars said if the one praying addresses anyone else besides Allāh and His messenger by using the ‘*Kāf*’ of addressing someone (the pronoun ‘*Kāf*’ that indicates you are addressing someone in Arabic), his prayer is invalidated. If a man entered upon you whilst you are praying and said, ‘*Assalāmu ‘Alayka*’, so you replied, ‘*Wa ‘Alayka al-Salām*’, your prayer is nullified, except if you were ignorant of that ruling.

2 – How can it be correct that he is addressed and he is absent and does not hear, and he is far from you? In fact, after his death he is deceased (ﷺ).

The answer: Our address to him (speaking in the direct manner to him) will be transferred to him, for indeed the

¹ Muslim (537).

Prophet (ﷺ) said, “Send your supplication of peace upon me, for indeed your supplication of peace reaches me wherever you are.”¹ So if you supplicate for peace upon him, it reaches him from wherever you are, and due to the strength of your recollection of the Prophet (ﷺ) you address him as if he is present in front of you even if he is far away.

“*Wa Raḥmatullāh*”, ‘and the mercy of Allāh.’ Mercy along with peace has in it completion, since through mercy arises the attainment of the objective (goodness), and through peace arises the removal of what is feared (evil). If therefore, peace and mercy are combined, what the person wants is completed for him (attainment of good and removal of evil), so you ask Allāh to have mercy upon him and His peace to be upon him.

As for ‘*Barakāt*’, ‘the blessings’: The word ‘*Barakāt*’ is the plural of the word ‘*Barakah*’ (blessing), and *Barakah* is the abundance of goodness and its continuation. The scholars of language say it is derived from the word ‘*birka*’, and that is a collection of water (a lake or something of that nature, whether larger or smaller), and typically it is large and the water is stationary within it (not flowing like a river).

The summary of the meaning is that you ask Allāh that he safeguards His messenger (ﷺ), and that He encompasses him in mercy and blessings.

¹ Abū Ya‘lā (1/361).

Then you move on to “*Assalāmu ‘Alaynā*”, ‘peace be upon us.’ The phrase ‘upon us,’ if we say it means the Muslims as a whole, that may bring about an issue with the statement, ‘upon the righteous servants of Allāh’ (righteous specified as opposed to all Muslims), and if we were to say it means all of the Islamic Ummah [nation] who are the Ummah [nation] (nation, followers) of Muḥammad (ﷺ), the meaning of the righteous servants is then every righteous servant in the Heavens and the Earth.

And if we say the meaning is the congregation (those currently praying with you), it may cause a problem as well since the person may not have anyone with him, he may be praying alone. Therefore, the best of the statements (explanations) is that we say, ‘upon us’ i.e. the Ummah [nation] of the Prophet (ﷺ), and ‘upon the righteous servants’ includes every righteous servant in the Heavens and the Earth due to the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ),

“So, when you have said this, then you have surely sent the greetings to every good (pious) slave – worshipper of Allāh, whether he be in the heavens or the Earth.”¹

Even the Angels, because the companions used to say, “*Salam* (peace) upon Jibrīl, upon Mikā’īl. So the Messenger (ﷺ) said, “Say, peace be upon us and upon the good (pious) slaves of Allāh, so, when you have said this, then you have surely sent

¹ Bukhārī (1202).

the greetings to every good (pious) slave – worshipper of Allāh, whether he be in the heavens or the Earth.” The Angels are from the pious slaves of Allāh, without doubt, just as Allāh said:

﴿وَقَالُوا اتَّخَذَ الرَّحْمَنُ وَلَدًا سُبْحَنَهُ ۚ بَلْ عِبَادٌ مُّكْرَمُونَ ۝ لَا

يَسْـَٔفُونَ ۚ بِالْقَوْلِ ۖ وَهُمْ بِأَمْرِ رَبِّهِمْ يَعْمَلُونَ ۝﴾

“They are but honored slaves. They speak not until He has spoken, and they act on His command.” (al-Anbiyā:

26-27)

"*Ashhadu An Lā Ilāha illa Allāh*" 'I bear testification there is no deity worthy of worship in truth except Allāh.' '*Ashhadu*' meaning I attest and acknowledge with my heart just as someone does upon physically seeing something with his eye. Hence it is said 'أشهد' '*Ashhadu*' and not 'أقر' '*uqirru*' (I attest), because it is as if this attestation is a definitive attestation just like a person is absolutely certain of what he sees with his own eye.

Your statement '*An Lā Ilāha illa Allāh*', (there is no deity worthy of worship in truth except Allāh), I hear a lot the people saying, "أشهد أن لا إله إلا الله" (*Ashhadu An Lā Ilāha illa Allāh*... with stress upon the 'noon' as a *shaddah*), and this is a mistake in accordance to the rules of Arabic grammar. Rather we say, '*Ashhadu An Lā*...' lightly, (no *shaddah* or stress on the 'noon'), and we amalgamate it with the '*lām*', because '*Anna*' stressed

with a *shaddah* does not enter into a negative sentence, rather the lightened version instead of the stressed one does.

Your statement, “*Lā Ilāha illa Allāh*”: ‘*ilāh*’ means the one worshipped, so it is upon the Arabic pattern of words upon ‘*fi’āl*’ with the meaning of ‘*maf’ūl*’, and this occurs a lot in the Arabic language. For example, there occurs *ghirās* with the meaning of *maghrūs*, (something planted), also ‘*binā*’ meaning ‘*mabnī*’ (something built), and ‘*firāsh*’ meaning ‘*mafrūsh*’ (something laid down e.g. carpet).

The meaning of ‘*ma’lūh*’ is ‘*Ma’būd*’ (the one worshipped), and the evidence is the statement of Allāh:

﴿وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ﴾

“And verily, We have sent among every Ummah [nation] (community, nation), a Messenger (proclaiming), ‘Worship Allāh alone, and avoid (or keep away from) Taghūt (all false deities)’” (al-Nahl: 36).

Allāh also stated:

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِيَ إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا﴾

﴿١٥﴾ فَأَعْبُدُونِ

“And We did not send any messenger before you (O Muḥammad) but we inspired him (saying) none has the

right to be worshipped except I (Allāh), so worship Me, (alone and none else). (Al-Anbiyā: 25).

Hence, 'ilāh' means *Ma'būd* (the worshipped one), therefore meaning, there is no deity to be worshipped in truth except Allāh.

Here there is an issue; we witness upon this Earth that which is worshipped besides Allāh; statues are worshipped besides Allāh, idols are worshipped besides Allāh, trees are worshipped besides Allāh, people are worshipped besides Allāh, the Angels are worshipped besides Allāh, the Sun is worshipped besides Allāh, the Moon is worshipped besides Allāh, cows are worshipped besides Allāh, all these are worshipped besides Allāh, so how can it be correct we say there is no deity to be worshipped except Allāh?

The answer: There is an erased section to the statement that is required by necessity, and the erased section has the meaning of "truth", meaning there is no deity in truth deserving of worship except Allāh. Based upon this, the predicate of the '*Lā*' is erased, and it is not what comes after "illa". What is after is *Badal* of it (a substitute), in other words, there is no deity in truth deserving of worship except Allāh the Mighty and Majestic, as for what is worshipped besides Allāh then it false, just as Allāh stated:

﴿ ذَٰلِكَ يَآءِ اللَّهِ هُوَ الْحَقُّ وَأَنْتَ مَا يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ هُوَ الْبَاطِلُ

وَأَنْتَ اللَّهُ هُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْكَبِيرُ ﴿٦٢﴾

“That is because Allāh He is the truth, (the only true God of all that exists, who has no partners or rivals with Him), and that what they (the polytheists) invoke besides Him is, it is falsehood, and verily Allāh He is the Most High, the Most Great” (Al-Hajj: 62).

"*Wa Ashhadu Anna Muḥammadan 'Abduhu Wa Rasūluh* 'and I bear testification that Muḥammad is His servant and Messenger': You testify that Muḥammad is His servant and Messenger, so he is a servant under the command of His Lord, and he is not someone to be worshipped, he is certainly a Messenger and not a liar. Due to this the scholars said a servant is not worshipped, and a messenger is not belied, may the peace and salutations of Allāh be upon him.

Look at the order!

"التَّحِيَّاتُ لِلَّهِ وَالصَّلَوَاتُ وَالطَّيِّبَاتُ "

“All the compliments and the best regards prayers, and good things are due to Allāh.”

This is the right of Allāh.

“السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ”

“Peace be upon you O Prophet.”

This is the right of the Prophet (ﷺ).

“السَّلَامُ عَلَيْنَا”

“Peace be upon us.”

This is your right.

“وَعَلَى عِبَادِ اللَّهِ الصَّالِحِينَ”

“Peace be upon the good slaves of Allāh.”

This is the right of the pious servants generally.

So the first right upon the person is the right of Allāh, then the right of the Messenger (ﷺ), then your own right, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said, “Begin with yourself...”,¹ then the right of the people as a whole generally. Here we gave precedence to the *Salām* upon the Prophet (ﷺ) over and above ourselves, because it is obligatory we give precedence to the Prophet (ﷺ) over ourselves, and because of this it is obligatory upon every believer to sacrifice himself for the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ). For indeed his right upon us is greater than our own right upon ourselves, and greater than the right of our parents upon us. Therefore, due to this the *Salām* upon him is given precedence.

And if he wishes he can say (another version) as reported by Muslim from Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه):

¹ Muslim (997).

التَّحِيَّاتُ الْمُبَارَكَاتُ ، الصَّلَوَاتُ الطَّيِّبَاتُ لِلَّهِ ، السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ
وَرَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ ، السَّلَامُ عَلَيْنَا وَعَلَى عِبَادِ اللَّهِ الصَّالِحِينَ ، أَشْهَدُ أَنْ
لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ¹

*Attahīyātul Mubārakātu Waṣ Ṣalawātut Ṭayibātu lillāhi
Assalāmu ‘Alayka Ayyuhan Nabiyyu Wa Raḥmatullāhi
Wa Barakātahu Assalāmu ‘Alaynā Wa ‘Ala ‘Ibādillahiṣ Ṣāliḥīn
Ashhadu An Lā Ilāha Illallāh Wa Ashhadu Anna
Muḥammadan Rasūlullāh.*

There is also a third version narrated by Abū Mūsá (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ):

التَّحِيَّاتُ الطَّيِّبَاتُ الصَّلَوَاتُ لِلَّهِ ، السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ وَرَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ
وَبَرَكَاتُهُ ، السَّلَامُ عَلَيْنَا وَعَلَى عِبَادِ اللَّهِ الصَّالِحِينَ ، أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا
اللَّهُ ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ²

*Attahīyātut Ṭayibātu Waṣ Ṣalawātut lillāhi Assalāmu
‘Alayka Ayyuhan Nabiyyu Wa Raḥmatullāhi Wa
Barakātahu Assalāmu ‘Alaynā Wa ‘Ala ‘Ibādillahiṣ Ṣāliḥīn
Ashhadu An Lā Ilāha Illallāh Wa Ashhadu Anna
Muḥammadan Rasūlullāh.*

This is the first *tashahhud*.

¹ Muslim (403).

² Muslim (404).

Abū Dāwūd reported from Abū 'Ubaydah from his father, "It was as if the Prophet (ﷺ) was upon *radf*¹ in the two units (*rak'ah*)."²

Aḥmad reported from the hadith of Ibn Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه), that the Prophet (ﷺ), "When he was in the middle of the prayer he would rise up after finishing from his *tashahhud*."³

¹ A heated stone, this is an example to illustrate that the first sitting was brief and not lengthy

² Abū Dāwūd (995), Nasā'ī (1177), and Aḥmad (1/386).

³ Aḥmad (1/459).

The Third and Fourth Units of Prayer

He then rises up saying the *Takbīr* (*Allāhu Akbar*), raising his hands to the level of his shoulders – if he was in a three-unit prayer like Maghrib, or four-unit prayer like Dhuhr– so he rises to complete his prayer. If he were performing something other than a three or four-unit prayer, (the two-unit prayer) whether obligatory like Fajr, or the shortened prayer for a traveler, in that case he completes the *tashahhud* and finishes.

Bukhārī reported from Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه), “He would say the *Takbīr* when rising from the second unit after sitting (for *tashahhud*).”¹

Bukhārī also reported from Ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه), “When he would stand after the two units he would raise his hands... (along with the *Takbīr*).”²

Hence the places in the prayer where the hands are raised are four:

- 1 – With the opening *Takbīrah al-Ihrām*.
- 2 – With the bowing (*rukū’*).
- 3 – When rising from the bowing.
- 4 – When rising up from the sitting of *tashahhud* (standing up for the 3rd unit).

¹ Bukhārī (735).

² Bukhārī (739).

There are no other places where the hands are raised.

He prays the rest as it has been mentioned, except that he suffices with the recitation of al-Fātiḥah alone (no additional Qur'ān in the third and fourth units). Bukhārī reported from Abū Qatādah (رضي الله عنه), In Dhuhr prayers the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) used to recite al-Fātiḥah along with two other chapters (*Sūrah*s) in the first two units, and in the other two units (final two) just al-Fātiḥah alone.”¹

If he were to increase on that in Dhuhr and ‘Aṣr occasionally then it is no problem, but his recitation must be the same in the first two (in length), and shorter in the second two.

Muslim reported from Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī (رضي الله عنه), “The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) used to recite in the first two units of Dhuhr and ‘Aṣr – in each one – the amount of 30 verses (in average length of recitation), and in the last two, the amount of 15 verses (in average length of recitation). Or he said, “Half of that (i.e. half of 30, so 15 again), and in ‘Aṣr in the first two units – in each one – the amount of 15 verses and in the last two units the amount equating to half of that.”²

And when he rises up for the forth unit, is he supposed to sit momentarily before rising up? We say, the same difference exists as previously mentioned.

¹ Bukhārī (759 & 762).

² Muslim (452).

The Final Sitting (Final *Tashahhud*)

Then he sits for the final *tashahhud*, and if he was in a two-unit prayer then he performs the final *tashahhud* (which is the only one) after the second unit, and if he is in a three-unit prayer he performs the final *tashahhud* after the third unit.

Hence, the final *tashahhud* is in the second unit of a two-unit prayer, in the third unit of a three-unit prayer, and in the fourth unit of a four-unit prayer.

It is required that he knows a difference exists in the manner of actually sitting for the final *tashahhud* as opposed the first sitting of *tashahhud* – if the prayer was one that has two sittings (i.e. three or more units). If the prayer has two sittings like Maghrib or the four-unit ones, then he is to sit in the first sitting as '*muftarish*' (on his left foot, right foot propped up), and as '*mutawarrik*' in the final sitting (left leg tucked under the body, sitting upon the buttocks and right foot propped up).

The Physical Posture of the Final Sitting

He sits as '*Mutawarrik*', and this has three manners:

1 – You sit upon the ground on your buttocks, and take your left leg from under your right shin out to the right side. Prop up your right foot, in order that you are balanced and secure in the sitting, and in order to have the difference between the first and second sitting.

2 – Lay both legs flat on ground (as opposed to right one propped up due to foot propped up), take both legs out to the right side, meaning do not prop up the right foot, rather, lay it down and take it out to the right side, and similarly the left one, and the left leg is under the right shin, (i.e. as you were in position one but instead of propping up the right foot, leave it flat on the ground too).

3 – Lay both legs flat on ground, take both feet out to the right, lay them down (no propping up), but place you left foot in between your right shin and thigh. Bukhārī reported from Abū Ḥumaid (رضي الله عنه), “And when he sat in the last unit he pushed his left foot forward, and kept the other foot propped up and sat over his buttocks.”¹

Muslim reported from ‘Abdullah b. Zubayr (رضي الله عنه) who said, “When the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) used to sit in the prayer, he placed his left foot between his thigh and shin, and laid down

¹ Bukhārī (828)

his right foot, and he placed his left hand on his left knee, and he placed his right hand on his right thigh, and pointed with his finger.”¹

So these are the three descriptions for the ‘*tawarruk*’ position of sitting. If it is said, is he supposed to do all three in a single state (alternate around during the same sitting)? We say no; however, do this one once, another one another time etc. If it is mentioned in the Sunnah in various manners, then act upon all of them.

¹ Muslim (579).

The Verbal Statements of the Final *Tashahhud*

1 – He reads the first *tashahhud* (as mentioned previously)

2 – And adds:

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ كَمَا صَلَّيْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَعَلَى
آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ ، وَبَارِكْ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ كَمَا
بَارَكْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ

*Allāhumma Ṣalli ‘Ala Muḥammad Wa ‘Ala Āli
Muḥammad Kamā Ṣallayta ‘Ala Ibrāhīma Wa ‘Ala Āli
Ibrāhīma Innaka Ḥamīdun Majīd Wa Bārik ‘Ala
Muḥammad Wa ‘Ala Āli Muḥammad Kamā Bārakta ‘Ala
Ibrāhīma Wa ‘Ala Āli Ibrāhīma Innaka Ḥamīdun Majīd.*

“O Allāh send Your *Ṣalāh* (graces, honors, and mercy) upon Muḥammad and upon the family (or the followers) of Muḥammad, just as You sent Your *Ṣalāh* upon Ibrahim and upon the family (or the followers) of Ibrahim, and send blessings upon Muḥammad and upon the family (or the followers) of Muḥammad just as You sent blessings upon Ibrahim and upon the family (or the followers) of Ibrahim. Verily, You are the most Praiseworthy, the most Glorious.”

Bukhārī reported from Ka‘b b. ‘Ujrah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) that the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) taught them how to send the salutations upon him with that.¹ Aḥmad also reports this².

Or he can say:

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ ، وَعَلَى أَزْوَاجِهِ وَذُرِّيَّتِهِ ، كَمَا صَلَّيْتَ عَلَى آلِ
إِبْرَاهِيمَ ، وَبَارِكْ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى أَزْوَاجِهِ وَذُرِّيَّتِهِ ، كَمَا بَارَكْتَ عَلَى آلِ
إِبْرَاهِيمَ ، إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ

*Allāhumma Ṣalli ‘Ala Muḥammad Wa ‘Ala Azwājihi Wa
Dhurriyatihi Kamā Ṣallayta ‘Ala Āli Ibrāhīma Wa Bārik
‘Ala Muḥammad Wa ‘Ala Azwājihi Wa Dhurriyatihi
Kamā Bārakta ‘Ala Āli Ibrāhīma Innaka Ḥamīdun Majīd.*

“O Allāh send Your Ṣalāh (grace, honors, and mercy) on Muḥammad and on his wives and on his offspring, as you sent Your Ṣalāh on Ibrahim’s family. O Allāh, send Your blessings on Muḥammad and on his wives and on his offspring, as You sent Your blessings on Ibrahim’s family, for You are the most Praiseworthy, the Most Glorious). Bukhārī and Muslim reported it from Abū Ḥumaid as-Sā’idī.”³

¹ Bukhārī (3370).

² Aḥmad (4/244).

³ Bukhārī (3369) and Muslim (407).

“اللَّهُمَّ” ‘*Allāhumma*’ its origin is ‘*Yā Allāh*’, the ‘*Yā*’ of calling is erased, and substituted by the ‘*Mīm*’ and it is started in the name of Allāh seeking blessings in that.

The meaning of ‘prayer’ (*Ṣalāh*) upon Muḥammad is the praise upon him in the Heaven. In other words, O Allāh praise him among the Angels that are with You. Praise upon him is inclusive of being pleased with him (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), and the elevation of his remembrance among the creation, so you say, ‘O Allāh send your *Ṣalāh* upon him’.

‘And upon the family (or followers) of Muḥammad.’ Some of the scholars said the meaning is the believers from his family, and some of them said it is his followers upon the religion. What is correct is that if “آلِهِ” ‘the family’ is mentioned in conjunction with the followers, then it itself specifically refers to the believers of his family, and if the followers are not conjoined with it then the meaning is the followers (as a whole) upon his religion.

Based upon this you are saying: O Allāh send your prayer upon Muḥammad and all those who followed him upon his religion, because in this sentence only the word “آلِهِ” ‘*Ālihi*’ is mentioned, (hence meaning all the followers too), so remember this meaning.

Hence you have supplicated for yourself too since you are from his followers upon his religion.

'Just as You have sent the *Ṣalāh* upon Ibrahim and the family (or followers) of Ibrahim', so you ask Allāh to send prayer upon Muḥammad (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and his family (and followers) just as He sent the prayer upon Ibrahim (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام) and his family (or followers). The '*Kāf*' here is to highlight causal reasoning not resemblance. So the meaning is just as You bestowed upon Ibrahim and his family (or followers) then also bestow upon Muḥammad and his family (and followers), so it is a means through the actions of Allāh upon their like.

'Indeed you are the Most Praiseworthy, the Most Glorious.' "*Ḥamīd*" means the praised one, and also the one who praises, because He, the Mighty and Majestic, praises the ones who deserve praise from the creation, so He praises the prophets and the righteous.

As for '*Majīd*', that is from '*Majd*' and that is greatness and perfection of dominion; therefore, if you say: 'You are the *Ḥamīd Majīd*', you have praised Allāh that He is the most praiseworthy and Most Glorious. *Ḥamīd* means He praises whoever deserves praise and He is praised upon the perfection of His attributes, and *Majīd* in the perfection of His greatness.

'And send Your blessing upon Muḥammad', means send Your blessings upon Muḥammad and his legislation (*Sharī'ah*), since blessings in his legislation are blessing upon him (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ).

'And upon the family of Muḥammad.' We say here what we said previously [concerning this statement]; the same applies

to the statement 'Just as You blessed'.¹ After the final *tashahhud* he seeks refuge in Allāh from four affairs²: from the punishment of the Fire, from the punishment of the grave, from the trials of life and death, and from the evil trial of the Dajjāl, and that is due to the severity of these four affairs.

'I seek refuge' - '*Aūdhu*'- means I seek recourse in Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic, and turn to Him for refuge and safety from these four matters.

Muslim reported the command upon doing that after the final *tashahhud* from the hadith of Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه): "When one of you finishes from the final *tashahhud*, then seek refuge in Allāh from four: from the punishment of the Fire...."³ [It is found in] Abū Dāwūd too⁴.

Muslim reported from Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه), "The Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) used to teach us the *tashahhud* just like he used to teach us a chapter of the Qur'ān."⁵

¹ [PN] Meaning that the same explanation is applicable to these two segments of the supplication.

² [PN] Bukhari no. 792 and Muslim no. 929.

إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ عَذَابِ الْقَبْرِ ، وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ فِتْنَةِ الْمَسِيحِ الدَّجَالِ ، وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ
فِتْنَةِ الْمَحْيَا وَفِتْنَةِ الْمَمَاتِ

³ Muslim (588).

⁴ Abū Dāwūd (983).

⁵ Muslim (590).

The scholars differed in this matter upon two opinions: Is it an obligation or a recommendation? The majority of the scholars are upon the opinion it is recommendation (*mustahabb*). The opinion that it is an obligation is strong due to the Prophet (ﷺ) having said it as a command, and because these (four) affairs are tremendous (in severity), if a person is not protected from them he is in danger.

Shaikh al-Islam Ibn Taymīyah (رحمته الله) mentioned that it is obligatory to seek refuge from these four matters as per one of the interpretations in the school of Imam Aḥmad (رحمته الله), and indeed some of the companions of Imam Aḥmad (رحمته الله) took the position that it is obligatory to seek refuge from these four matters.

Many people are lax with seeking refuge from these four, you find them making *Taslīm* (final *Salām*) after completing the initial *tashahhud* supplications, despite the fact that the Messenger (ﷺ) commanded this, and the default with a command is obligation. The danger is that these four are so severe, they are deserving of a person to seek refuge in Allāh from them in every prayer. Due to this Muslim reported from Ṭāwūs (رحمته الله) – and he is one of the *Tābi'ūn*, the generation after the companions – that he commanded his son to repeat the prayer when he did not seek refuge from these four¹,

¹ Muslim (590).

therefore it is not suitable for a person to abandon seeking refuge in Allāh from these four matters.

So persist upon and adhere to it in every prayer due the salvation that is in it, and happiness of this World and the Hereafter. I also advise my brothers the Imams (of mosques) to not leave it, because those behind you are in need of it. Some Imams – may Allāh guide us and them – suffice with just ‘*Allāhumma Ṣalli ‘ala Muḥammad...*’ then they give the final *Salām*. Why my brother?! Behind you are the congregation who love to say the full supplication (including the seeking refuge), so complete it with them (read it and allow time for them to read it too), you have the reward for yourself and those who follow you in congregation.

‘From the punishment of *Jahannam*’, i.e. the Hell-Fire, and it is named as such, because it is ‘*jahma*’ which means darkness- and we seek refuge in Allāh. It is all darkness and gloom, so we ask Allāh for safety. Allāh said:

﴿ إِذَا الْقَوَايِمَا سَمِعُوهُمَا شَبَّهَا وَهِيَ تَفُورُ ۖ تَكَادُ تَمَيِّزُ مِنَ الْغَيْظِ ۚ ﴾

“When they are cast therein, they will hear the (terrible) drawing in of its breath as it blazes forth. It almost bursts up with fury.” (Al-Mulk: 7-8)

Meaning, from its fury it is about to break apart and burst upon them; we seek refuge in Allāh from the punishment of *Jahannam*.

‘And from the punishment of the grave.’ There is a continuous punishment for the disbelievers in the grave, and there is a punishment that may be continuous or intermittent for the sinners from [amongst] the believers.

‘And from the trials of life and death.’ The trial means the test, and it can be with goodness (tested with blessings), and it can be with evil, as Allāh the Most High said,

﴿وَنَبْلُوكُم بِالشَّرِّ وَالْخَيْرِ فِتْنَةً وَإِلَيْنَا تُرْجَعُونَ﴾

“We shall make a trial of you with evil and with good.”
(Al-Anbiyā: 35).

Allāh may test a servant with evil, with calamities, illness in his body, in his family, in his relatives, also with poverty, and other than that from the calamities to test him, so will he remain patient, or not? And possibly the test may be with good to test whether he will be grateful or ungrateful.

Therefore, the trial of life can be with good, and with evil; it is with evil to test if the person will be patient or not. And it is with good to test if the person will be grateful or ungrateful. A person in reality is therefore between two affairs: either goodness or evil, both are a test.

A person may be tested in his religion, we seek refuge in Allāh, and that revolves around two matters: upon doubts and upon desires.

Doubts [mean] that the truth becomes unclear to a person to the extent he cannot distinguish between truth and falsehood, so he slips into error and is destroyed.

Desires mean a person has knowledge and the ability to distinguish, but he has evil intent. The trial of the Christians was through doubts, and the trial of the Jews was through desires, because they knew the truth but opposed it. This is how a person is – we seek refuge in Allāh – he may be tested in his religion and so the truth becomes blurred to him, and he may be tested in his religion such that he does not desire the truth.

Death has two trials:

One of them is before death.

The second one is after death.

The trial before death is that when the time of death comes upon a person the *Shayṭān* (the Devil) comes to him and presents doubts to him, to the extent that he may exit from the religion at the point of death, hence it is important we always ask Allāh for a good ending. Perhaps Shayṭān presents himself to a person in the appearance of the person's parents or just his father, and says, "My son, the religion of Islam is not a correct religion, and what is correct is Judaism or Christianity, so be a Jew or a Christian", and the person at that moment when death is upon him does not have complete distinction (control and focus of his affair), so he is put to trial, and then he becomes

either a Jew or a Christian and refuge is sought with Allāh. This is a great trial, as long as the soul has not exited it is a very dangerous affair; this is the trial of death that occurs prior to death.

The trial that occurs after death is that a person is tested in his grave; so two angels come to him and ask him, “Who is your Lord, what is your Religion, and who is your Prophet?” As for the believer he will say, “Allāh is my Lord, Islam is my religion, and my prophet is Muḥammad.” Then a caller calls out from the heavens that my servant has spoken the truth, so spread out (a resting space) for him from the Paradise, and clothe him from Paradise, and open a door to Paradise for him. And his grave is expanded to the length of the eyesight, and the fragrances and blessings of Paradise come to him from that which pleases him, until he says, “My Lord, establish the Hour so that I may return to my family”, because he sees that there is greater blessing there, and that is the blessing of Paradise, wherein there is that which no eye has seen, nor ear has heard and no thought of it has occurred to any mind.

As for the non-Muslim, like the doubtful one or the disbeliever, then he says when asked, “*Hāh, hāh, (huh? huh?)* I don’t know, I heard the people saying something so I said it”, because Īmān did not enter into his heart and refuge is sought with Allāh. He simply heard it and said it without actually having Īmān, so he is beaten with a metal sledgehammer or rod, he screams a scream such that everything hears it except

humans, and his grave is squeezed upon him until his ribs crack. And so he says, "My Lord, do not establish the hour", because he knows beyond this punishment is that which is greater and more severe; this is the post-death trial.

"And from the trial of the anti-Christ the *Dajjāl*". The *Dajjāl* is a man whom Allāh, the Most High, sends at the end of time who claims to be a lord. Allāh creates affairs to occur via him that will be from the greatest of tests and trials, to the extent that he comes to a group of people and calls them to follow him, and if they accept he commands the sky and the rain falls, and he commands the Earth and the vegetation grows. Then he comes to another group of people and calls them (to his misguidance too), but they reject his call, so they become barren (no rain, no growth), and refuge is sought with Allāh, they have no water, nor vegetation.

Nations that no one knows of except Allāh will be tested by this great trial. The believers will be saved from it, because it will be written between his eyes, "*Kāfir*" (*disbeliever*), with broken letters, "*Kāf Fā Rā*" (ك-ف-ر). Every believer – literate or illiterate – will read it, and every wrongdoer will be blinded to it, whether he was actually literate, or illiterate. Hence he falls into his trial and refuge is sought with Allāh. He takes him as a lord besides Allāh, and he (*Dajjāl*) will have Paradise and Hell with him, but in reality his Paradise is the Hell, and his Hell is the Paradise; all this from the trial that Allāh – the Mighty and Majestic – wishes by His wisdom. This *Dajjāl* will

remain upon the Earth 40 days, the first day like a year, i.e. like twelve months, the second day like a month, the third day like a week, and the remainder of the days like normal days, (one year, two months and two weeks approximately).

This *Dajjāl*, after he remains upon the Earth 40 days upon the manner and quantification described by the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), 'Isā the son of Maryam (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام) descends from the heavens, and he kills this *Dajjāl*. 'Isā (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام) descends as a just ruler, he does not accept other than Islam or death, so whoever does not accept Islam he kills him.¹

Then the person (after that supplication) makes supplication for himself with whatever he wishes from the goodness of this World and the Hereafter.²

So call upon Allāh with whatever you wish, since the very act of *du'ā* (supplication) is worship in of itself, just Allāh said:

﴿وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي

سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ ﴿٦٠﴾

And your Lord hath said: Pray unto Me and I will hear your prayer. Lo! Those who scorn My service, they will enter hell, disgraced. (Ghāfir: 60)

¹ Bukhārī (7131) and Muslim (2933, 2934 and 2937).

² Nasā'ī from the ḥadīth of Abū Hurairah (1311)

If he wishes he can supplicate for his parents in the obligatory or supererogatory prayers too, and he can supplicate for whom he loves from the Muslims. Bukhārī reported from the hadith of Ibn Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه), "Then select the invocation you like best and recite it."¹ In some copies, "Then he **should** select..." as a command.

Muslim reported it with the wording, "Then afterwards he should select from the invocations whatever he wishes or what he loves".²

And it is ok for him to supplicate for something connected to the worldly matters, so he says, "O Allāh bestow upon me a righteous wife", or "a beautiful wife", or, "Oh Allāh grant me a spacious home", or " a clean new car", or something resembling that, because the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said in the hadith of Ibn Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه) , "Then select the invocation you like best and recite it", and a person is in poverty before his Lord for his religious and worldly needs, in other words in that which he requires for the affairs of his religion and of his world.

And whomsoever from the people of knowledge said he should not supplicate for worldly matters then their statement is weak, because it opposes the generality of the Prophet's (صلى الله عليه وسلم) statement in the hadith of Ibn Mas'ood when he

¹ Bukhārī (835)

² Muslim (402) and Abū Dāwūd (968).

mentioned the *tashahhud*, “Then select the invocation you like best and recite it”.

What is preferred and superior of course is that he guards over the prescribed supplications, then (after them) if he wishes to increase and supplicate with what he wishes then there is no problem with this.

It is befitting of a person if he loves to supplicate to Allāh the Mighty & Majestic that he makes his supplication before the final *Salām* (which finishes the prayer), i.e. it should be after he finishes the *tashahhud* and the seeking of refuge from the four affairs (but before the *Salām*).

With this we realize that the practice which many people have become accustomed to today, which is that every time they give the final *Salām*, they start making supplication to Allāh the Mighty and Majestic, until they end up making it from the necessary Sunnah affairs, this has no evidence upon it. The Sunnah has mentioned making supplication before the final *Salām*.

Supplication after the obligatory or supererogatory prayers is not legislated, and it is better that your supplication is before the *Salām*. It is reported from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he was asked, “Which supplication is most heard (answered)?” He

said, "In the depth of the last part of the night, and at the ends of the obligatory prayers."¹

What are the 'ends of the obligatory prayers'? Are they after it (i.e. after *Salām*), or the last part of the prayer (before *Salām*)?

The people of knowledge have differed over that; what is correct is that the meaning is the last part of the prayer itself (before final *Salām*), and the evidence of that is the hadith of Ibn Mas'ood that when the Prophet mentioned the *tashahhud* he said, "Then he should select the invocation he likes best" (i.e. straight after the other prescribed invocations), indicating that the 'last part' of the prayer which is the time of supplication is the end of the actual prayer before *Salām*.

¹ Tirmidhī (2499).

The *Taslīm* (Final *Salām*)

Then he makes two *Taslīms* (*salāms*); one to his right and one to his left, and he says, “*Assalāmu ‘Alaykum Wa Raḥmatullāh*”

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ

Muslim reported from Jabir b. Samurah (رضي الله عنه), “It is sufficient for one of you to place his hand upon his thigh then give *Salām* upon his brother who is to his right and to his left.”¹

And if he increased upon his first *Salām* and added, “*Wa Barakātahu*”

وَبَرَكَاتُهُ

sometimes then no problem.²

And what is appropriate is that he turns his head to the extent that the whiteness of his cheek can be seen from the right (when giving *Salām* to the right) and left (when giving *Salām* to the left).

Muslim reported from Sa’d b. Abū Waqqāṣ (رضي الله عنه), “I used to see the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) give *Salām* to his right and to his left, until I could see the whiteness of his cheek.”³

This is the sign upon completion of the prayer, but it must be with this specific invocation (i.e. *Assalāmu ‘Alaykum*).

¹ Muslim (431).

² Abū Dāwūd from hadith of Wā’il b. Ḥujr (997).

³ Muslim (582).

The Invocations after the Prayer

1. He seeks forgiveness three times, and says,

أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ

"Astaghfirullah, Astaghfirullah, Astaghfirullah"

I seek forgiveness from Allāh.

And the wisdom in seeking forgiveness after the prayer is that a person is never free of shortcomings in his prayer, hence it is legislated for him to seek forgiveness thrice.

2. Reported from Thawbān who said, "When the Prophet (ﷺ) used to leave from his prayer he would seek forgiveness three times, and he would say,

اللَّهُمَّ أَنْتَ السَّلَامُ ، وَمِنْكَ السَّلَامُ ، تَبَارَكْتَ ذَا الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ

*"Allāhumma Anta al-Salām Wa Minka al-Salām
Tabāarakata Yā Dha al-Jalālī Wa al-Ikrām"*

"O Allāh you are As-Salam, and from You is all peace, O Possessor of Majesty and Honor." Al-Awzā'ī was asked: How is the seeking of forgiveness? He said, "Say, *Astaghfirullah, Astaghfirullah.*"¹

He also reported from 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها) that when the Prophet (ﷺ) would give the *Salām* he would not sit except for the

¹ Muslim (591).

amount of time it takes him to say, and she mentioned the above.¹

3. Reported from al-Mughīrah b. Shu'bah (رضي الله عنه) that he used to say at the end of each obligatory prayer,

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ، اللَّهُمَّ لَا مَانِعَ لِمَا أَعْطَيْتَ وَلَا مُعْطِيَ لِمَا مَنَعْتَ ، وَلَا يَنْفَعُ ذَا الْجَدِّ مِنْكَ الْجَدُّ

”None has the right to be worshipped but Allāh and He has no partner in Lordship or in worship or in His Names and the Attributes and for Him is the kingdom and all the praises and thanks are for Him and He is the Omnipotent. O Allāh! Nobody can hold back what You give and nobody can give what You hold back. Hard efforts by anyone, (or riches) for anything cannot benefit one against Your Will.”²

4. Reported from ‘Abdullah b. al-Zubayr (رضي الله عنه) that he used to say at the end of each obligatory prayer when giving *Salām*,

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ ، وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ ، لَهُ الْمُلْكُ ، وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ ، وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ، لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ ، وَلَا نَعْبُدُ

¹ Muslim (592).

² Bukhārī (844) and Muslim (593). The wording is that of Bukhārī.

إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ ، لَهُ النِّعْمَةُ ، وَلَهُ الْفَضْلُ ، وَلَهُ الثَّنَاءُ الْحَسَنُ ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ ،
مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْكَافِرُونَ

“None has the right to be worshipped but Allāh and He has no partner in Lordship or in worship or in the Names and the Attributes and for Him is the kingdom and all the praises and thanks are for Him and He is the Omnipotent. There is no might, nor power except with Allāh, none has the right to be worshipped except Allāh, and we worship none except Him. For Him is all favor, grace and glorious praise. None has the right to be worshipped except Allāh and we are sincere in faith and devotion to Him although the disbelievers detest it.”¹

He said the Prophet (ﷺ) used to supplicate with them at the end of every prayer.

5. Reported from S‘ad b. Abū Waqqāṣ (رضي الله عنه) who said: The Prophet (ﷺ) used to seek refuge (with Allāh) after each prayer with these words,

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْبُحْلِ ، وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْجُبْنِ ، وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ أَنْ
أُرَدَّ إِلَى أَرْدَلِ الْعُمْرِ ، وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ فِتْنَةِ الدُّنْيَا ، وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ عَذَابِ
الْقَبْرِ

¹ Muslim (594).

“O Allāh I seek refuge with You from miserliness, and I seek refuge with You from cowardice, and I seek refuge with You from returning to the most degrading of age (old age in the scenario whereby an individual begins to lose his senses), and I seek refuge with You from the trial of this World, and I seek refuge with You from the punishment of the grave.”¹

6. Reported from Mu'ādh b. Jabal (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said to him, “O Mu'ādh, by Allāh indeed I love you, by Allāh indeed I love you, I advise you O Mu'ādh, do not leave off at the end of each prayer to say, ‘O Allāh aid me upon Your remembrance, and Your gratitude, and Your perfection of worship.’”² Imam Nawawī said its chain of narration is sound.
7. Reported from 'Uqbah b. 'Āmir (رضي الله عنه) who said: The Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) commanded him to read the *Mu'awidhāt* after every prayer.³
8. Reported from Muslim b. al-Hārith al-Tamīmī (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) confided with him, “When you leave from the Maghrib prayer say, ‘O Allāh save me from the Fire’ seven times, for indeed if you say that then died that night, then salvation from the Fire will be written for

¹ Bukhārī (6370).

² The reference for this was mentioned earlier.

³ Abū Dāwūd (1523), Tirmidhī (2903), Nasā'ī (1337), Aḥmad (4/155); and Ibn Ḥibbān authenticated it (Ṣaḥīḥ ibn Ḥibbān 2004).

you. And when you pray Fajr say that similarly, for indeed if you died that day, then salvation from the Fire will be written for you.”¹

Nasā'ī reported it similarly and added the wording, “So say before talking...”²

9. Reported from Mu'adh b. Jabal (رضي الله عنه) who said: The Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said,

“Whoever says upon leaving (finishing) the Fajr prayer (and before talking to anyone) ‘None has the right to be worshipped but Allāh and He has no partner in Lordship or in worship or in the Names and the Attributes and for Him is the kingdom and all the praises and thanks are for Him and He is the Omnipotent’, ten times, then he is given seven matters: Ten rewards are written for him due to it, and ten evil deeds are wiped from him due to it, he is raised ten levels due and they are for him the equivalent of freeing ten slaves, and they will be a protection for him from the Shayṭān (Satan), and a safeguard from evil, and no sin will afflict him that day of his except Shirk (polytheism) alongside Allāh. And whoever says it when he departs from Maghrib prayer he will be given similar to all that for that night of his.”³ Reported by Ibn Abū

¹ Abū Dāwūd (5079).

² Nasā'ī (9859).

³ Ṭabarānī in al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr (20/65).

Dunyá and Ṭabarānī with a sound chain, and it has multiple supportive narrations.

The *Tasbīḥāt* 'Subḥān Allāh' and the *Taḥmīdāt* 'Alḥamdulillah' and the *Takbīrāt* 'Allāhu Akbar' and the *Tahlīlāt* 'Lā Ilāha illa Allāh' have been mentioned upon four manners:

First: *Subḥān Allāh*, *Wa al-Ḥamdu lillāh*, *Wa Allāhu Akbar* 33 times, then he says *Lā Ilāha illa Allāh Waḥdahu Lā Sharīka Lahu Lahul Mulk Wa Lahul Ḥamd Wa Huwa Ala Kulli Shayin Qāḍir* to complete the 100.¹

Second: *Subḥān Allāh* 33 times, *al-Ḥamdu lillāh* 33 times, *Allāhu Akbar* 34 times, and he does not say *Lā Ilāha illa Allāh*.²

Third: *Subḥān Allāh*, *Wa al-Ḥamdu lillāh*, *Wa Lā Ilāha illa Allāh*, *Wa Allāhu Akbar* 25 times each, hence the total is 100 altogether.³

Fourth: *Subḥān Allāh* 10 times, *al-Ḥamdu lillāh* 10 times, *Allāhu Akbar* 10 times.⁴

This is the description of the prayer that I have mentioned in accordance to what is apparent to me from the Sunnah.

¹ Muslim (597).

² Muslim (596).

³ Tirmidhī (3413) and Aḥmad (5/184).

⁴ Abū Dāwūd (5065), Tirmidhī (3410), Nasā'ī (1349), Ibn Mājah (926) and Bukhārī (6329).

Chapter 9

The Pillars and Obligations of the Prayer

The Pillars

The First: Standing with ability to do so. This is a pillar in obligatory prayers specifically due to the statement of Allāh:

﴿حَافِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَى وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ﴾ (٢٣٨)

“And stand before Allāh with obedience [and do not speak to others during the Ṣalāh (prayers)].” (Al-Baqarah: 238)

And the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ) to ‘Imrān b. al-Ḥusain, “Offer the prayer (Ṣalāh) standing, and if you cannot do that, then offer the prayer sitting, and if you cannot do even that, then offer the prayer lying on your side.”¹

The Second: *Takbīrah al-Ihrām* The opening ‘*Allāhu Akbar*’, due to the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ) to the one who prayed badly, “When you stand for your prayer then perfect your Wuḍū (first), then face the Ka’bah and say *Allāhu Akbar*.”²

The Third: Recitation of al-Fātiḥah, due to the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ),

¹ Bukhārī (1117).

² Bukhārī (6251) and Muslim (397).

“There is no prayer for the one who does not recite the Fātiḥah of the Book.”¹

The Fourth: The Bowing (*Rukū'*), due to the statement of Allāh:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا ارْكَعُوا وَاسْجُدُوا وَعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمْ وَافْعَلُوا

الْخَيْرَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَفْلِحُونَ ﴿٧٧﴾

“O you who have believed! Bow down, and prostrate yourselves, and worship your Lord and do good that you may be successful.” (Al-Hajj: 77)

And due to the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ) to the one who prayed badly and did not pray upon the required manner, “Then bow until you are at ease in bowing.”

The Fifth: Rising up from the bowing, due to the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ) to the one who prayed badly, “Then rise up until you are at ease (in the standing upright position).”

The Sixth: The prostration, due to the statement of Allāh:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا ارْكَعُوا وَاسْجُدُوا

“O you who have believed! Bow down, and prostrate yourselves.” (al-Hajj: 77)

¹ Bukhārī (756) and Muslim (394).

And due to the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ) to the one who prayed badly, "...then prostrate until you are at ease in prostration..."

The Seventh: Sitting between the two prostrations, due to the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ) to the one who prayed badly, "...then rise up until you are at ease in sitting..."

The Eighth: The second prostration, because every unit of prayer must have two prostrations due to the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ) to the one who prayed badly, "...then prostrate until you are at ease in prostration..." after having said, "then rise up until you are at ease in sitting..."

The Ninth: The final *tashahhud* due to the statement of Ibn Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه), "We used to say in the prayer before the *tashahhud* was made obligatory..."¹, hence indicating the *tashahhud* had been made obligatory thereafter.

The Tenth: Prayers upon the Prophet (ﷺ) in the final *tashahhud*, this is the popular stance in the school of Imam Aḥmad.²

The Eleventh: Correct order of the Pillars; the standing, then the bowing, then rising up from it, then prostration, then sitting between the two prostrations, then the (second) prostration. So (for example) if he began with the prostration

¹ Nasā'ī (1277).

² *Muntaha al-Iradāt* (1/63).

before the bowing his prayer would be invalid, because he has contravened the order.

The Twelfth: Tranquility (being at ease and settled) in the pillars, due to the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ) to the one who prayed badly, “Then bow until you are at ease (in bowing), then rise up until you are at ease, then prostrate until you are at ease...”

Tranquility is that a person is at ease in the position of that particular pillar until every bone returns into its natural position. The scholars have said that is what tranquility is, even a little of it, so whosoever does not have tranquility in his prayer then there is no prayer for him even if he prayed a thousand times.

Upon this, we realize the error of what we witness from many people who pray without having tranquility, especially in the standing after the bowing, and the sitting in between the two prostrations. So you see, before a person is even upright in standing from the bowing, he has already gone down into prostration, and before he is sitting upright (in between the prostrations) he is already down into prostration again. This is a great error, if a person prayed upon this way a thousand times it would not be accepted from him, since the Prophet (ﷺ) said to the man who was missing out the tranquility in his prayer - after the man came and gave *Salām* to the Prophet (ﷺ), “Go back and pray again, for you have not prayed...” This indicates that if someone prays a prayer and

misses any of the pillars or obligations generally speaking, then there is no valid prayer for him. Even if he was ignorant of the issue of the pillars, there is still no valid prayer for him.

The Fourteenth: The *Taslīm* (final *Salām*), and what is correct is that both of the *Taslīms* are a pillar, and it is not permissible to miss either of them, not in the obligatory nor supererogatory prayers.

The Obligations (*Wājibāt*)

The obligations are the statements or actions that if a person left [one of them] on purpose his prayer would become invalid, but if he left them forgetfully then he can compensate for them with the prostration of forgetfulness. From them are:

1 – The *Takbīrāt* (saying ‘*Allāhu Akbar*’) other than the opening *Takbīr*. These other *Takbīrāt* are from the obligations of the prayer, and as for the opening *Takbīr*, then that is a pillar from the pillars. The prayer cannot commence without it.

Hence, all the *Takbīrāt* are obligations and are omitted if forgetfulness occurs (made up by prostration of forgetfulness). The exceptions to that are:

- The additional *Takbīrāt* in the ‘Eid prayer, and Rain prayer (*Istisqā*), for they are Sunnah only.
- The *Takbīrāt* of *Janāzah* prayer (prayer upon the deceased), for they are pillars.
- The *Takbīr* to enter into bowing for the one who is late and catches the Imam in bowing (*rukū*’), for that is Sunnah only. So if a person came and the Imam was in the bowing position, he is to make the opening *Takbīr* (*Takbīrah al-Ihrām*) whilst standing upright, then he goes down into bowing. The *Takbīr* there is Sunnah in this situation for him; this is what the scholars of jurisprudence (fiqh) concluded – may Allāh have mercy upon them.

The Evidence That the *Takbīrāt* Are From the Obligations (*Wājibāt*):

The statement of the Prophet (ﷺ): "If he says *Takbīr* (*Allāhu Akbar*) then say *Takbīr*, and when he says *Samī' Allāhu liman Ḥamidahu*, then say *Rabbanā Lak al-Ḥamd...*"¹ This indicates that the presence of this remembrance is a must, since a command is for an obligation.

2 – The *Tasbīhāt* (supplications and remembrance) in bowing and in prostration; in the bowing '*Subḥāna Rabbī al-'Adhīm*, and in the prostration '*Subḥāna Rabbī al-'Ala*.

3 & 4 – The *Tasmī'* and *Taḥmid*, i.e. the statement, '*Samī' Allāhu Liman Ḥamidahu*' when rising up from bowing, and the statement, '*Rabbana Lak al-Ḥamd*' after having risen up from bowing (when standing in the upright position), for the Imam and the one praying alone. As for the one being led by an Imam then he only says '*Rabbana Lak al-Ḥamd*' when he rises from the bowing.

5 – The first *tashahhud* and its sitting.

6 – Supplicating for forgiveness once at a time. This is the sixth obligation from the obligations of the prayer, and it has already passed by that the statement '*Rabbi Ighfirli*' is said between the two prostrations.

¹ Bukhārī (732) and Muslim (411).

These obligations, if a person left them on purpose, then his prayer becomes invalid, and if he leaves them forgetfully, then his prayer is correct and it is compensated for by the prostration of forgetfulness.

If a person knows the pillars of the prayer and its obligations, then everything else besides them is Sunnah.

Chapter 10

Two Great Principles

The First Principle:

Actualization of the Sunnah is better than plentiful actions, hence Allāh said:

﴿لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا﴾

“That He may test you which of you is best in deed.” (Al-Mulk: 2)

And He did not say, “The **most** in deeds”.

An example: It is Sunnah to lighten the (two units) Sunnah prayer of Fajr, so if a person said: I want to elongate the recitation, so I will read in this Sunnah prayer Surah al-Ma'ārij and Surah al-Insān and I will elongate the bowing and prostrating, because I love to call upon Allāh whilst I am in prostration and to take my time.

Another person though says: I will pray the two rak'ah Sunnah of Fajr lightly, I will recite in the first unit along with the Fātiḥah Surah al-Kāfirūn and in the second unit Surah al-Ikhlāṣ. The second person is better, because he has actualized and implemented the Sunnah, and following the Sunnah is superior.

I see that some people elongate the Sunnah of Fajr, so it is good for us to bring to their attention that which is better, so when

he gives Salām come to him gently and say: 'My brother, may Allāh reward you with good. You – Allāh willing – desire good and are seeking the reward from Allāh, and no doubt you did not elongate the prayer except due to your love of it, however the Sunnah is to lighten it.' So we don't rebuke them with a firm rebuke as such, since they have not performed an evil.

Another example: Praying 11 units in *Tarāwīh* is better than praying 23, because it is more in conformity with the Sunnah. "Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) never exceeded eleven units (*Rak'ah*) in Ramadan or in other months..."¹ "And perhaps he would pray thirteen..."²

Another example: If a person said, I want to fast the whole year, and another one said, I will fast a day and not fast the next (alternate), the second one is better despite the fact that he is less in his actions because he has implemented the Sunnah.

Another example: A person prays behind the station of Ibrahim (عليه السلام) after *Tawāf* (circumambulation of the Ka'bah) and he elongates the recitation, elongates the bowing, and elongates the prostration. Another person prays two units behind the station and recites in the first unit Surah al-Kāfirūn, and in the second unit Surah al-Ikhlāṣ and lightened the

¹ Bukhārī (1147), Muslim (738).

² Bukhārī (698 & 1140) and Muslim (737 & 763).

prayer. The second one is better because he has implemented the Sunnah.

Another example: A man comes to Makkah and he makes *Tawāf* (circumambulates the Ka'bah) and makes *Ṣa'ī* (the running between the mountains of Ṣafa and Marwa) and he shortens the hair and comes out of *iḥram* and then awaits Hajj to begin. What is better for him after this is to not make *Tawāf* since the companions who were with the Messenger (ﷺ) did not make (additional) *Tawāf*, and the Prophet (ﷺ) himself did not make *Tawāf* except for the *Tawāf* of arrival, of *Ifāḍah*, and the farewell *Tawāf*.

Another example: A person performing Hajj as a *Mutamatti'*¹ does his first 'Umrah and there are five days left till Hajj so he says: I'll take the opportunity and perform a third, fourth, fifth and sixth 'Umrah in addition to the first one. Every day he does an 'Umrah. Another man says though: I will not do another 'Umrah, rather I will suffice with the first 'Umrah and then just Hajj; so the second person is better.

Pay attention the one performing Hajj! Don't tire yourself and your Muslim brothers out by exerting pressure upon them. You go to *Tan'im* (the closest location outside the Haram area), enter into *Iḥrām* and come, due to this 'Aṭā (رحمة الله) said – and he was from the senior *Tābi'un* (students of the companions) and from the scholars of Makkah, well versed in the rites of

¹ 'Umrah then Hajj in one trip.

Hajj and 'Umrah – “Indeed these people who go out to *Tan'im* and then perform 'Umrah coming in from it, I don't know, if they are sinning or rewarded for that, because they have performed an innovation.” With great regret we find many of the pilgrims – and I don't say the majority (but many though) – perform the first 'Umrah, then on the second day they perform a second 'Umrah, and then a third and fourth; the first he does for himself, the second for his mother, the third for his father, the fourth for his grandmother, the fifth for his grandfather, the sixth for his paternal uncle.

Where are we in comparison to the Salaf?! Are they neglectful of that or have they ignored it? By Allāh, they (the righteous Salaf) are better than us in sincerity, and better than us in following the Qur'ān and Sunnah, yet they did not do this.

So a person may bring as [a proof] the hadith of Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī about the story of the two men who the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) sent out, then the time for prayer entered and they did not find water, so they made *tayammum*¹ and prayed. Then they ended up finding water still within the prayer time, so one of them made ablution (*Wuḍū*) and repeated the prayer, as for the other one, he did not repeat. The Prophet (ﷺ) said to the one who repeated, “You have the reward twice”, and he said to the one who did not repeat, “You have implemented the Sunnah.”² So he declared the reward as

¹ Alternative form of purification using earth.

² Abū Dāwūd (338) and Nasā'ī (433).

double for the first one; this necessitates that the more the action increases the more the reward is, so what is the response?

This man that repeated the prayer did so upon a personally derived conclusion in striving to implement the Sunnah (*ijtihād*), in the absence of being aware of what the Sunnah specifically dictates in the matter, and if a person performs an act striving to derive the correct conclusion despite the Sunnah being unknown to him, he is rewarded upon it. However, after the Sunnah becomes clear, if a person then adds additions upon the Sunnah he is not rewarded, and it is hoped he is spared of sin.

The Second Principle:

If certain worships are mentioned in various forms, then they can be performed upon those various manners; upon this manner once and a different manner another time (alternating), and in that are certain benefits:

The first benefit: Preservation of the Sunnah, because if you neglected one of the mentioned ways, then that particular manner would be forgotten and lost.

The second benefit: To pay attention when worshipping Allāh with this Sunnah so that your affair does not just become habitual (doing the worship in one standard way routinely without thinking). Many people begin to do their worship habitually and routinely if they only adopt one manner (and

leave the other Sunnah manners of that particular worship, if there are other ways), so they do not pay attention. But if he accustoms himself to say this once, and a different way the next, he becomes more attentive to the Sunnah.

So if a person said: What is the wisdom that the Sunnah has come in differing manners for some matters?

We say, the wisdom – and Allāh knows best:

1 – So that tedium does not occur in worship, because if he remained upon one manner constantly he may experience tedium in that.

2 – Some forms may be easier than other forms, and the easier one can take the place of the more difficult one, because some descriptions that are mentioned of the worships are easier than others sometimes, so that takes into consideration the lightening of worship upon the servants.

I will give an example of this: A person may be at work, and he loves to read all the legislated remembrances, but it will become lengthy if he says, '*Subhān Allāh, Wa al-Ḥamdu lillāh, Wa Allāhu Akbar*' 33 times, but it is easy upon him to say, '*Subhān Allāh*' ten times, and '*Alḥamdu lillāh*' ten times, and '*Allāhu Akbar*' ten times. So in this variation there is a degree of ease and facilitation upon the servants, since there is no doubt that this last version (ten times each only), is lighter upon the worshipper than the first (33 times each).

3 – If a person varies the worship, then it is more attentive to his heart, because if he takes a worship upon one manner only then he may perform it in an ‘automatic’ habitual manner, not feeling it, but just doing it as his habit. So he says ‘*Subhān Allāh, Alḥamdu lillāh, Allāhu Akbar*’ and he doesn’t know what he said, but simply utters them habitually. Due to this, if he does not pay attention, you find him doing the type he is accustomed to typically, but if he gives consideration to the different descriptions that are mentioned then that will be more focused for his heart and more attention.

These are some of the wisdoms in the variations in forms of worship.

Focus & Submissiveness in Prayer

Allāh, the Most High said:

﴿قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ۝ (١) الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ ۝ (٢) وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ
الَّلَّغِ مُعْرِضُونَ ۝ (٣) وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِلزَّكَاةِ فَاعِلُونَ ۝ (٤) وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ
لِفُرُوجِهِمْ حَافِظُونَ ۝ (٥) إِلَّا عَلَى أَزْوَاجِهِمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ
مَلُومِينَ ۝ (٦) فَمَنْ أَتَبَعَى وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْعَادُونَ ۝ (٧) وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ
لِأَمْنَتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رَاعُونَ ۝ (٨) وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَى صَلَوَاتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُونَ ۝ (٩)
أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْوَارِثُونَ ۝ (١٠) الَّذِينَ يَرِثُونَ الْفِرْدَوْسَ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ۝ (١١)﴾

“Successful indeed are the believers. Those who offer their Ṣalāh (prayers) with all solemnity and full submissiveness. And those who turn away from Al-Laghw (dirty, false, evil vain talk, falsehood, and all that Allāh has forbidden). And those who pay the Zakāt. And those who guard their chastity (i.e. private parts, from illegal sexual acts). Except from their wives or (slaves) that their right hands possess, - for then, they are free from blame; But whoever seeks beyond that, then those are the transgressors; Those who are faithfully true to their Amānāt (all the duties which Allāh has ordained, honesty, moral responsibility and trusts) and to their covenants; And those who strictly guard their (five compulsory congregational) Ṣalāh (prayers) (at their

fixed stated hours). These are indeed the inheritors. Who shall inherit the Firdaus (Paradise). They shall dwell therein forever." (Al-Mu'minūn 1-11)

With these great characteristics is the success of this World and the Hereafter, and 'success' (*ḥalāl*) is attainment of the desired matter and salvation from the feared matter. By way of it is the inheritance of al-Firdaws, and that is the highest levels of Paradise, and from these characteristics arises the submissiveness in prayer.

Khushū', as the people of knowledge have said, is the serenity and tranquility of the heart such that it manifests itself upon the limbs, i.e. that the heart is serene and tranquil not thinking (aimlessly) and not wandering around to anything not linked to the prayer. The effect of that *khushū'* of the heart then manifests itself upon the limbs such that the limbs are submissive and do not move except in that which is for the good of the prayer.

The 'prayer' (*Ṣalāh*) mentioned in the ayah includes all prayers, obligatory and supererogatory, so it is not specific to the obligatory nor the supererogatory, because '*Ṣalāh*' in His statement,

فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ

(Their prayer), is singular and attached (indicating generality).

Believe that when you stand for prayer you are standing before Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic, the One who knows the fraud

of the eyes and all that the chests conceal, and knows what his own-self whispers to him. Therefore, guard over your heart being preoccupied with your prayer, just as your body is preoccupied in prayer your heart should be directed to Allāh, just as your body is directed toward the Qiblah, to the direction that Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic commanded you with. As for the body being in the direction of what Allāh has commanded you but the heart is wandering and lost, then this is a great deficiency, to the extent some scholars say if whispering or distractive thoughts overcome the majority of the prayer then it becomes invalid, and the affair is certainly severe.

When you go to pray, then believe that you are approaching Allāh the Mighty and Majestic, and when you stand in prayer, then believe that Allāh the Most High is before your face, not in the Earth that you are in, but He is in front of your face, whilst He is upon His throne. That is not difficult upon Allāh. For indeed Allāh, there is nothing like unto Him in all His attributes, for He is above His throne, and He is in front of the face of the one who prays, at that time you enter into prayer and your heart is filled with reverence for Allāh the Mighty and Majestic, and love for Him and closeness to Him.

And when you stand to pray believe that you are calling upon Allāh the Mighty and Majestic, just as the Messenger of Allāh

(ﷺ) said, “Indeed when one of you stands in prayer then he is calling upon his Lord.”¹

Know also, that when you recite al-Fātiḥah that indeed you are calling upon Allāh and conversing with Him. It is established in the Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim from the hadith of Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger (ﷺ) said,

“Allāh said, ‘I have divided the prayer into two between Myself and My servant, - The ‘prayer’ that is divided is the recitation of al-Fātiḥah, it is termed as the ‘prayer’ because the al-Fātiḥah is a pillar of the prayer, which the prayer cannot be valid without, ‘... so when the servant says, ‘All the praises and thanks be to Allāh, the Lord of the ‘Ālamīn (mankind, jinn and all that exists)’, Allāh the Most High says – by Allāh from above the seven heavens - ‘My servant has praised Me’, and when he says, ‘The Most Gracious, the Most Merciful’, Allāh the Most High says, ‘My servant has lauded Me.’ When the servant says, ‘The Only Owner (and the Only Ruling Judge) of the Day of Recompense (i.e. the Day of Resurrection)’, Allāh, the Most High says, ‘My servant has glorified Me.’ He (the narrator) said once (instead), ‘My servant has entrusted himself to Me.’ And when he says, ‘You (Alone) we worship, and You (Alone) we ask for help (for each and everything).’ Allāh says, ‘This is between Me and My servant, and for My servant is what he asks

¹ Bukhārī (405) and Muslim (551).

for – worship is for Allāh, seeking aid is with Allāh, but it is for the servant – and when he says, ‘Guide us to the Straight Way’, Allāh says, “This is between Me and My servant and for My servant is what he asks for.”¹

So the prayer is a call between the one praying and his Lord, nothing to the like of this has ever been mentioned in any other worship. Fasting is for Allāh, as Allāh, the Most High said, “All the deeds of Adam’s sons (the people) are for them, except fasting which is for Me, and I will give the reward for it.”² However, that which has been mentioned regarding the prayer in terms of the servant calling upon his Lord and conversing with Him, he speaks and Allāh responds to him, has not been mentioned with regards to the fasting. This point, if we were to comprehend and recognize it, then it would be something tremendous; however, we – and we ask Allāh to treat us with His pardon – neglect this a lot, as if we read al-Fātiḥah just in passing (without thought). We do not recollect that we are calling upon Allāh and that Allāh converses with us. So He says: “My servant has praised Me”, “My servant has lauded me”, “My servant has glorified Me”, “This is for My servant, and for My servant is what he asks.” We don’t perceive this, except for those whom Allāh wills.

Therefore, this indicates the importance of the prayer. Hence a person stands and calls upon Allāh, and prostrates and he is

¹ Muslim (395).

² Bukhārī (1904) and Muslim (1151).

the closest he can be to Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic, *Subhān Allāh al-'Adhīm*. You have combined between calling upon Him whilst standing and being close to Him whilst prostrating, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "The closest a servant is to his Lord is whilst he is in prostration."¹ He is not the closest he can be whilst standing, because in prostration is submission to Allāh, such that a person places his most honorable part – and that is the face – onto the ground which is trodden by feet. So you place onto the ground the forehead and nose in submission to Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic; you place down the highest part of your body down to the level of the lowest part of your body, the feet. The feet and forehead are now at one level, both are on the ground that is trodden upon, and due to this you say, "*Subhāna Rabbī al-'Ala*" (How perfect my Lord is, free of deficiency, the Most High). It is as if you realize that when you gathered your soul (all your body from top to bottom), onto the ground, you say: How perfect my Lord is, free of deficiency, free of lowliness. So the appropriateness (of that statement here) is clear, just like bowing (*rukū'*) is for reverence so you say, "*Subhān Allāh al-'Adhīm* (How perfect is my Lord, free of deficiency, the Supreme).

Perceive this O my brother, whilst you are praying, that you are calling upon Allāh when reciting al-Fātiḥah, and that you become closer to Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic in

¹ Muslim (482).

prostration; "The closest a servant is to his Lord is whilst he is in prostration."¹

If only we comprehended and perceived these great meanings when praying, for if only we comprehended them – and we ask Allāh to aid us in that – we would leave from the prayer with hearts different to the hearts that we entered with, and a person would increase in light, happiness, joy and delight in his heart. Due to this the prayer was the coolness of the eyes of the Prophet (ﷺ). He said, "Women and fragrance have been made beloved to me from the World, and the coolness of my eye has been made in the prayer."² The prayer is therefore the coolness of the eye for the believers, but we miss these meanings, because we do not comprehend and perceive what is in it from these great meanings.

The most important thing I see in the prayer, after a person performs its actions upon the Sunnah, is the presence of heart, because many people now are not overcome by whisperings and distracting thoughts except if they enter into prayer, and despite that you find him engaged in whispers about things with no benefit whatsoever, and as soon the prayer finishes, all these wandering thoughts disappear and fly away from him.

Since this prayer is the greatest act the body engages in, the *Shayṭān* has been empowered over the sons of Adam within it,

¹ Muslim (482).

² Nasā'ī (3391) and Aḥmad (3/128).

until he comes and obstructs between the servant and his prayer. He says: remember such and such, and such and such, and so he preoccupies him from the prayer, then when the person finishes from the prayer, all these whisperings fly away and disappear as soon as he gives the final *Taslīm*. Shayṭān is keen to obstruct between a person and his prayer until his prayer becomes like a peel [i.e. worthless] that results in no benefit, because the *Shayṭān* himself disbelieved due to leaving an action from the form of prayer, by leaving the prostration he was commanded to perform. He was arrogant and he refused and disbelieved, so this affair that he disbelieved as a consequence of, he wishes to obstruct between the son of Adam (people) and the same affair (prayer, prostration), so that the servant does not perform it upon the perfect manner.

It is mentioned that a man came to Abū Ḥanīfah (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) and said to him: “O Shaikh, I have forgotten such and such” – regarding an affair that was of great importance to him and he would miss out on a lot if he forgot it – so he said to him, “Go and pray, for indeed you will remember it.” And when he began to pray he remembered what he had forgotten.

This (story) has a possible point, because the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) informed us that the *Shayṭān* comes to a person when the prayer is established and says to him, remember such and such, and such and such, recalling things he did not remember until

he is caused to forget how much he has prayed.”¹ This is something experienced and witnessed.

However, is there any cure for this illness? The answer is yes, just as it is established from the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), “Allāh did not send a disease except that He sent a cure, he who knows of it, knows it, and he who is ignorant of it, is ignorant of it.”²

Every disease, whether in religious (disease a person experiences in his practice of religion) or worldly matters, physical or social, has a cure, because Allāh, is the All-Wise and renders reasons for things to occur and prevention for them. It occurs if the reasons are present, and it disappears if the preventative factors are present.

The Messenger (ﷺ) informed and taught his Ummah [nation] the cure for that. If you feel that (whispers) in your prayer then spittle to your left three times, and say, ‘I seek refuge in Allāh from *Shayṭān* the accursed’, because a man complained of this affair to the Prophet (ﷺ) so he said to him,

“That is a devil called *Khanzab*, – the Prophet (ﷺ) named him – so if you perceive him then seek refuge in Allāh from him three times, and spittle to your left three

¹ Bukhārī (608), Muslim (389).

² Ibn Mājah (3438) and Aḥmad (1/377).

times.” The man said: “So I did that and Allāh distanced him from me.”¹

Allāhu Akbar! When the cure comes across an appropriate place it benefits by the permission of Allāh. Here it came across a believing heart, (a heart that) believes that what the Messenger (ﷺ) said is the truth, and that it will certainly disappear. However, many people now believe in what the Messenger (ﷺ) came with, but only upon actual experience of it, i.e. they say: I will try it to see, does it benefit or not? We say to him, we can try it, upon your heart or tongue, for indeed you will not believe in reality, and therefore you will not find the effect of it. You are tried, and so Allāh deprives you of the effect of this cure, because you have not believed (instead you say, ‘I will test it to see if it works first before believing’).

There must by necessity be a doctor, who knows the appropriate medicine, and there must be an appropriate location that accepts the treatment, and the medicine must be pro-active. The cure in this problem is pro-active, and the doctor is knowledgeable (the Messenger) but what remains is the location itself: if the person accepts that and knows that this is truth he will benefit from it. Due to this the companion benefitted. He said, “I did that and Allāh distanced it from me.” Allāh distanced it from him and saved him from its evil.

¹ Muslim (2203).

One issue remains: How can a person move (to spittle to his left) whilst in prayer?

We say, movement in the prayer due to a need is permissible and there is no issue in it.

So if it said: How can he spit and he may be in the row with someone to his left? We say, if there is someone to your left, then this is a Sunnah. If you were to do it you would harm someone, so do not; seeking refuge with Allāh is sufficient in this case, since if you spit and there is someone to your left then no doubt he will be harmed.

Due to this, if we are in prostration, it is legislated to spread out the two hands [on] either side, however, if he were in the row and he spread between his hands he would harm the person next to him, so we say, do not spread out in order to avoid creating harm in the name of practicing a Sunnah.

Hence, this is the sound way of eradicating these whispers.

A person may say that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, “He says remember such and such, and such and such recalling things he did not remember until he is caused to forget how much he has prayed.”¹ So what is the cure to this doubt (not remembering how much you have prayed)?

We say: All praise is due to Allāh; every disease has a cure. With regards to doubt, either one of the two possibilities

¹ Bukhārī (608) and Muslim (389).

present themselves as overwhelmingly stronger, hence you act upon that. Alternatively, neither possibility overwhelms the other in strength, in which case you act upon certainty, which is the lower amount.

Practical Example: A man doubts in Dhuhr prayer, has he prayed three or only two? It becomes apparent to him overwhelmingly that he has prayed three, so we say make it as three and pray your fourth in that case, and if it overwhelmingly occurs to you that you have only prayed two, then make it as your second and complete the third and fourth after it.

Another example: A man doubts, has he prayed three or only two? Nothing outweighs the other in strength of possibility in his mind. He says, "By Allāh, I cannot conclude if it is two or three at all." We say, build upon the certainty, and that is the lesser amount (considering it as only being two you have prayed); therefore, make it as two and pray the third and fourth.

The Principle: If he doubts, and something overwhelmingly does outweigh the other option, then he must act upon that, but if he doubts and no option outweighs the other at all in his mind, then he must act upon the certainty, and that is the lesser amount (since he is certain he has prayed two for sure, he is in doubt whether he did the third, hence he begins from the second to be sure).

There remains an issue, is there anything that can compensate this doubt or deficiency that occurs from a person? We say yes, doubt and uncertainty is a disease, which has a cure. The cure is the prostration of forgetfulness; two prostrations for forgetfulness are sufficient.

However, does he prostrate before or after the final *Salām*? We say, if he had a position that overwhelmed the other option and he had therefore acted upon that, then prostrate after the final *Salām*. However, if he did not have an overwhelming idea, and therefore built upon certainty, which is the lesser amount, then the prostration is before the *Salām*.

The hadith of Abū Sa'īd (رضي الله عنه) and the hadith of 'Abdullah b. Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه) indicate that. The Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said,

“If one of you doubts in his prayer, so he doesn't know how much he has prayed, three or four, then let him cast away the doubt and build upon what he is certain of, then let him prostrate two prostrations before giving the final *Salām*.”¹

And in the hadith of Ibn Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه), he (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said,

“And if one of you doubts in his prayer, then strive to seek the truth (and that is if an overwhelmingly stronger thought arises regarding one of the options), and

¹ Muslim (571).

complete upon it, then he gives the final *Salām* to finish, then he prostrates two prostrations.”¹

It should be known that there are three possible reasons for the prostration of forgetfulness to be performed: (due to) addition, or detraction, or doubt.

Firstly: If a person gives the final *Salām* accidentally before completing the prayer and if it was on purpose, the prayer becomes invalid, but if he was forgetful, and then he remembered, it is obligatory upon him to complete it, then prostrate for forgetfulness.

Example: A person prays Dhuhr, and when he sat and read the first *tashahhud* he continued and completed the supplications and gave *Salām* forgetfully. In this case there are still two units of prayer remaining upon him, we say to him: pray two more units, then give the final *Salām*, then prostrate two prostrations for forgetfulness.

The evidence is the hadith of Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) prayed one of the two ‘*Ashī*’ prayers – which is either Dhuhr or ‘*Aṣr* – and he gave final *Salām* after two units, then he stepped forward to a wide piece of wood in the masjid, he leaned upon it and interlocked his fingers as if he was angry, meaning not pleased about an affair, or not at ease, because he had not completed the prayer. And this is from the blessings of Allāh upon a person, that if a defect occurs

¹ Bukhārī (401) and Muslim (572).

from him in his worship that he is unaware of, he finds in himself unease and discomfort, until Allāh bestows upon him the completion of it (and he realizes and understands the deficiency that has occurred). This is contrary to a person who does not care, as for the one who gives importance to perfecting his actions, if supposing he forgot an affair, then Allāh will facilitate for him that which allows him to perfect it.

The important point is, when the companions saw him upon this state – and the Prophet (ﷺ) had been given a great level of veneration surrounding him – the people were timid to speak to him, even the most significant of people Abū Bakr and 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) were timid in speaking to him. There was a man amongst them who the Prophet (ﷺ) used to banter with and call him *'Dhū al-Yadayn'* i.e. the one with the two hands, because his hands were long. The Prophet (ﷺ) would kindly banter with him, so this man came forth and said, “O Messenger of Allāh, have you forgotten or has the prayer been shortened?” The Messenger (ﷺ) said, “I did not forget, and neither has it been shortened.” So he negated the normal forgetfulness that overcomes humans, and he negated the fact that it was now shortened (by revelation), and that is a legislative ruling whereby mistakes within it are not possible, so the man said, “Rather, you forgot.” The Prophet (ﷺ) said to the people, “Is it as Dhū al-Yadayn says?” They said, “Yes, O Messenger of Allāh.” Then he went forth to his place, and prayed what he had left, i.e. two units, he gave the final

Salām, then he prostrated two prostrations for forgetfulness, and he gave *Salām* again.¹

Another example: He prayed Fajr, and gave *Salām* after the first unit, and then he remembered. Here we say, he prays the unit left, then gives *Salām*, then prostrates the two prostrations, then gives *Salām* again, and upon this way continues (to work out the rest).

Secondly: A person adds a unit or two (*rak'ah*) into his prayer, or adds an extra prostration or two, or an extra standing. In this case, if he did it purposely then his prayer becomes invalid due to the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ),

“If someone innovates something which is not present in our religion, then it will be rejected.”²

If, however, he was forgetful, then his prayer is not invalidated, but if he remembers during the addition (he is accidentally performing) then it is obligatory upon him to return, then the *tashahhud*, then he gives the final *Salām*, then he prostrates, then *Salām* again, and if he remembers during the addition we say: he returns, sits, does the *tashahhud*, gives *Salām*, then prostrates two prostrations, then gives *Salām* again.

An example of it: He stands up for a fifth unit in Dhuhr prayer, so when he goes into bowing and says upon rising, ‘*Sami‘ Allāhu liman Ḥamidahu*’ he remembers it is the fifth. In

¹ Bukhārī (714) and Muslim (573).

² Bukhārī (2697) and Muslim (1718).

this scenario he does not complete the unit, if he did carry on and complete the unit his prayer would be invalidated. Rather, he is to sit instantly, read the supplications of *tashahhud*, complete it then give *Salām*, and then prostrate two prostrations, then give *Salām*.

The evidence is the hadith of Ibn Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) led them in Dhuhr and prayed five units, "...when he finished the prayer it was said to him, 'O Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم), has there been any change in the prayers?' He said, 'What is it?' The people said, 'You have prayed so much and so much,' (i.e. added onto the prayer an extra unit). So the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) bent his legs, faced the Qiblah, and performed two prostrations, and finished his prayer with the *Salām*. When he turned his face to us he said, 'If there had been anything changed in the prayers, surely I would have informed you; but I am a human being like you and liable to forget like you, so if I forget, remind me...'”¹

Therefore, if you added something into the prayer, and you remembered during the addition, then sit instantly, and complete, then prostrate two prostrations, then give the final *Salām*.

However, if you did not remember the addition until after the prayer – for instance you did not remember you have prayed five until you reach the final *tashahhud* – in this scenario we

¹ Bukhārī (401) and Muslim (572).

say continue in the *tashahhud*, then give *Salām*, then prostrate two prostrations then give *Salām* again.

Thirdly: An example of a deficiency: A man is praying Dhuhr for example, so he rises up from his first *tashahhud* which is after the second unit, without sitting (i.e. he forgets to sit for the first *tashahhud* after the second unit). So we say: if you remember before you are standing upright then return, and do the *tashahhud*, then continue from there. However, if you remember after you have risen up completely and are upright in standing, then do not return, whether you started reciting al-Fātiḥah or not. In this scenario carry on in your prayer from this state, then prostrate two prostrations at the end before the *Salām*.

The evidence upon this is the hadith of ‘Abdullah b. Buḥaynah (رضي الله عنه), “The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) led us in Dhuhr prayer and stood up after the second unit and did not sit down. The people stood up with him. When the prayer was about to end the people were waiting for him to say the *Taslīm*, he said Takbīr (*Allāhu Akbar*) while sitting and prostrated twice, before saying the *Taslīm* and then he finished the prayer.”¹

The people of knowledge said: Just like this, if a person leaves any obligation of the prayer out forgetfully, then he does not return to it if he goes beyond its place, and (instead) he prostrates for forgetfulness before the final *Salām*.

¹ Bukhārī (829) and Muslim (571).

An example of it: He forgets to say in the bowing, '*Subḥāna Rabbī al-'Adhīm*', and when he says, '*Sami' Allāhu liman Ḥamidahu*', he remembers he forgot to say, '*Subḥāna Rabbī al-'Adhīm*'. In this scenario he does not go back into bowing to say, '*Subḥāna Rabbī al-'Adhīm*', because he has surpassed its place, (he was already out of it rising up), rather he prostrates for forgetfulness before the final *Salām*.

Therefore, the principle now is: If he leaves an obligation forgetfully to the extent he surpasses its place, then he does not return to it but instead he prostrates two prostrations for forgetfulness before the final *Salām*, and the evidence for it is the hadith of 'Abdullah b. Buḥaynah (رضي الله عنه).

Fourthly: A man doubts in Dhuhr prayer, is he in the third unit now, or the fourth? We say to him: build upon what is overwhelmingly stronger in your mind, whether that be that it is the third or the fourth, complete from it, and prostrate two prostrations after the final *Salām*. He says: I have concluded it is indeed the fourth. We say to him: it is the fourth in that case, so complete the prayer from it, then give the final *Salām*, and prostrate for forgetfulness after the final *Salām*.

So if he says, I have concluded it is in fact the third, we say: make it the third in that case, and pray the fourth after it, then give the final *Salām*, and prostrate for forgetfulness after the final *Salām*.

The evidence for that is the hadith of Ibn Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said to the one who doubted in his prayer, whether he had prayed three or four, "Then he should seek the correct position – and the one who does is the one who has a conclusion dictating one or the other in the end – then he must complete based upon that, then he must give the final *Salām*, then he must prostrate two prostrations."¹

Fifthly: A man doubts whilst praying Dhuhr, is this the third or the fourth? We say to him: have you concluded anything in terms of one being stronger than the other? He says, no, I have not been able to conclude anything; it is all the same. We say, build upon the certainty, and the certainty is the lesser amount, so make it your third, and pray the fourth after it, and prostrate two prostrations before the final *Salām*.

Therefore, the prostration for forgetfulness is sometimes before the final *Salām*, and sometimes after it. It is before the *Salām* if deficiency occurred, and after the *Salām* if addition was made, and in situations of doubt. If he can conclude nothing overwhelmingly then it is before the *Salām*, and if he does conclude something overwhelmingly it is after the *Salām*.

This great prayer, all of us in reality – and we ask Allāh to treat us with His pardon – have deficiency in our prayers, so is there something from outside of the prayer that can compensate for it?

¹ Bukhārī (401) and Muslim (572)

We say yes, the Sunnah and *Rawātib* prayers, and they are twelve units in total:

Four units (*Rak'ah*) before Dhuhr, and two units after it, two units after Maghrib, two units after 'Ishā, and two units before Fajr. As for 'Aṣr, there is no attached *rātibah* prayer for it, neither before it, nor after it. If you pray them every day, Allāh builds for you an ever-lasting house in Paradise that does not change, and does not disappear, and there is no deficiency or defect in it. And you similarly do not come to an end, and do not become ill, and will not desire to turn away from it; you will remain in it forever.

Allāhu Akbar! If you want to build a house, its construction will not be completed in a single day ever. It will not be completed except after a year, or six months depending on the type of build it is to be, and only after effort and fatigue, and problems with the construction company and workers, (with constant orders and instructions). Sprinkle the building, fix this, pass such and such slabs, pass me such and such, and when the house is being built it is at risk of error occurring (in its construction), and at risk of danger, collapse, and fire. When it is completed, in the end the person will disappear from it (upon death).

With regret though, our hearts love the present, as Allāh stated:

﴿كَلَّا بَلْ تُحِبُّونَ الْعَاجِلَةَ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَتَذَرُونَ الْآخِرَةَ ﴿٢١﴾﴾

Not [as you think, that you (mankind) will not be resurrected and recompensed for your deeds], but you (men) love the present life of this world, and neglect the Hereafter. (Al-Qiyāmah: 20-21)

So guard over them my brother, and if you miss the ones before the prayer, pray them after the prayer, because it is proven the Prophet (ﷺ) made up missed *Rawātib* prayers.¹

Allāh made them these twelve (Rak'ah) units connected to the obligatory prayers in order that the deficiency (in the obligatory prayers) is completed by them. For indeed in the obligatory prayers there will be deficiency and shortcoming in them, and these supererogatory *Rawātib* fill the deficiency, and they are from the mercy of Allāh. Were it not that Allāh legislated that we pray these *Rawātib* supererogatory prayers they would have been an innovation.

The most emphasized of these *Rawātib* are the two units of Fajr, for indeed the Prophet (ﷺ) used to guard over them whilst a resident and when travelling. As for the *Rawātib* of Dhuhr, Maghrib and 'Ishā, he did not used to pray them when travelling.

Furthermore, it is better that you pray the *Rawātib* in your home if you have a house, for it is better than even praying them in Masjid al-Haram (in Makkah), even if your home is

¹ Bukhārī (1233) and Muslim (834).

rented, due to the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ), “The best prayer of a man is what is performed in his home except the obligatory prayers.”¹

The one who said this is the same one who said, “A prayer in my mosque is better than one thousand prayers in any other mosque except al-Masjid al-Haram.”² Due to this the Prophet (ﷺ) would implement practically what this hadith incorporates, so he used to pray the supererogatory prayers in his home, despite the fact that the door of his home was into the mosque itself, hence there was no effort to go the mosque, yet he would pray them at home.

Therefore, if you were in Makkah to perform 'Umrah or Hajj or for other than that reason, and you wished to pray supererogatory prayers, then doing so in your residence is better than in al-Masjid al-Haram, but if you went to al-Masjid al-Haram and prayed *taḥīyāt al-masjid* (two unit prayer for greeting of the masjid) for example, and the obligatory prayer was not beginning yet, then gather the goodness (and pray supererogatory whilst waiting), since the prayer in al-Masjid al-Haram is better than 100,000 prayers anywhere besides it.

An Issue: Do these *Rawātib* prayers have specified chapters (*surah*) of the Qur'ān that should be recited in them?

¹ Bukhārī (7290) and Muslim (781).

² Bukhārī (1190) and Muslim (1394).

The answer: The Sunnah of Fajr has specific recitation, in the first unit Surah al-Kāfirūn, and in the second unit Surah al-Ikhlāṣ.¹ Alternatively, in the first unit [the verses] from Surah al-Baqarah:

﴿قُولُوا آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا﴾

Say (O Muslims): We believe in Allāh and that which is revealed unto us (al-Baqarah: 136)

And from Surah Āl-'Imrān² (in the second unit):

﴿قُلْ يَٰٓأَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ تَعَالَوْا۟ إِلَىٰ كَلِمَةٍ سَوَآءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ﴾

Say (O Muḥammad): "O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians): Come to a word that is just between us and you, (Āl-'Imrān: 64)

Sometimes recite Surah al-Kāfirūn and Surah al-Ikhlāṣ, and sometimes the āyāt from Surah al-Baqarah and Surah Āl-'Imrān. This is best based upon the principle we alluded to earlier, that it is appropriate for a person to perform worship, which are varied upon all the various manners mentioned from the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ).

As for the remainder of the *Rawātib*, then they do not have specific recitations, except for the *rātibah* of Maghrib whereby

¹ Muslim (726).

² Muslim (727).

it is mentioned that Surah al-Kāfirūn and Surah al-Ikhlāṣ can be recited in it.

A Benefit:

The Sunnah of Fajr is distinguished from the remainder of the supererogatory *Sunan* prayers by certain matters:

The First Particularity: It has specified recitation, (specific parts of the Qur'ān).

The Second Particularity: It is lightened and not elongated, to the extent 'Ā'ishah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا) said, "The Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) used to pray the two units before the Fajr prayer and make them so light that I would wonder whether he prayed them with *umm al-Kitāb* (al-Fātiḥah) only."¹ This was due to the speed he prayed them with.

Due to this, if a person said: Do you prefer for me to elongate the remembrances, supplications and recitation when I pray the Sunnah of Fajr?

We say, the one who makes them shorter is better than the one who elongates them, and I witness people from the brothers who love goodness, and I find them elongating the Sunnah of Fajr. No doubt they want goodness, however goodness is in following the Sunnah, even if it is a small amount.

¹ Bukhārī (1171) and Muslim (724).

The Third Particularity: It is prayed when one is a resident and while travelling. 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها) said,

“And he never used to leave them...”¹

The *Rawātib* other than the Sunnah of Fajr are not prayed when travelling, and they are the *Rawātib* of Dhuhur, Maghrib and 'Ishā; these three you do not pray their *Rawātib* when you are travelling.

As for other than that from the supererogatory like Witr, night prayer, *Duḥa* (mid-morning) prayer, *taḥīyāt al-masjid*, *Istikhārah* prayer (seeking guidance in your affair), *Istisqā* prayer (the rain prayer), *Kusūf* prayer (eclipse prayer) – if we say it is a Sunnah – and other than that from the supererogatory, pray them when travelling.

The Fourth Particularity: It is greater in reward, the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, “The two (Sunnah) units of Fajr are better than the world and all of that which is in it.”² [The two rak'ah of Fajr are better than] the world since it was created up till the establishment of the Hour, with all of what is in it from the adornments, because its reward remains but as for the world it is finite and does not remain.

This necessitates for us that we strive upon these two units to the best of our ability, and that we pray them before Fajr. And

¹ Bukhārī (1159).

² Muslim (725).

if we enter (the mosque) and the Imam has already begun Fajr prayer then we do not pray them, we pray them after the prayer, or after the sun rises to the level of a spear.

The Fifth Particularity: Many of the people of knowledge said it is befitting that if he prays the Sunnah of Fajr he should lie down on his right side slightly, because the Messenger (ﷺ) used to do that¹. This short 'lie-down' is differed over by the people of knowledge, some say it is an absolute Sunnah (to be done always), and some of them say it is not a Sunnah, that rather it is for the purpose of a rest, and so someone who does not require it does not do it.

Some of them gave finer details, so they said if the person is someone who prays the night prayer and needs rest, it is Sunnah for him to take the rest, so he lies down on the right side. Otherwise (if it is someone who does not pray night prayer) it is not Sunnah, and this detailed opinion is the closest of the statements (to the truth) in this matter.

However, if he fears that by lying down on his right side he will fall asleep and leave the Fajr prayer until the sun ends up rising, in that case a Sunnah is not to be performed that causes the abandonment of an obligation.

There are other Sunnah prayers besides the *Rawātib*, the most emphasized of them is the Witr, and that is the seal of the night

¹ Bukhārī (626) and Muslim (736).

prayer with a solitary unit, or three, or five, or seven, or nine, and the upper limit is eleven.

Witr is an emphasized Sunnah, to the extent some of the scholars said it is obligatory, and Imam Aḥmad (رَحِمَهُ اللهُ) said: "Whoever abandons the Witr then he is an evil man, it is not befitting his testimony be accepted."

So the Witr is an emphasized Sunnah, but the Witr is not the *qunūt*, meaning the supplication:

اللَّهُمَّ اهْدِنِي فِيمَنْ هَدَيْتَ

'O Allāh guide us along with those You have guided.' Witr is that you seal the night prayer with a unit whether you say:

اللَّهُمَّ اهْدِنِي فِيمَنْ هَدَيْتَ, or whether you do not. In fact, the *qunūt* is not a Sunnah to be done always.

The Witr [prayed] with one unit for example, if he prayed 'Ishā prayer, then the two units *rātibah* of it, then [he performs] one unit as Witr, then that is permissible, [there is] nothing preventing that.

Performing Witr as three units has two manners of doing so:

1 – He prays two units and gives *Salām*, then prays the third separately.

2 – He prays all three units with one *tashahhud* at the end¹ and gives *Salām*.

Witr as five units is prayed as all five together with one *tashahhud* at the end.

Witr as seven units is prayed as all seven together with one *tashahhud* at the end.

Witr as nine units is prayed as all nine together; however, with two *tashahhud* sittings, and one *Salām* at the end. When he has prayed eight of the units he sits and does the *tashahhud*, then arises and prays the ninth, then sits at the end of it, does the final *tashahhud* and final *Salām*.

Therefore, the five and seven-unit Witr prayers are the same in description, and the nine-unit Witr differs in its description, and three-unit Witr has two ways.

As for the eleven-unit Witr, then he is to pray in twos, (all the way till ten), then finish with a single unit at the end.

The time for Witr is from 'Ishā prayer till the appearance of Fajr (Fajr time entering), even if a person combined Maghrib and 'Ishā at the time of Maghrib when travelling, or [as a] resident, then the time of Witr still enters even if it is before the actual *adhān* of 'Ishā time, since the point is 'Ishā prayer occurring. Due to this we say in the definition of Witr: 'It is a

¹ Hence no *tashahhud* after the second unit (rak'ah).

unit of prayer to seal the night prayer'; or three, or five, in accordance to what was mentioned previously.

So if a person asks, should I perform Witr before I sleep or in the last part of the night? We say: The Messenger (ﷺ) clarified the ruling,

“Whosoever fears he will not awaken in the last part of the night then perform Witr in the first part, and whosoever hopes to wake up in the last part then perform Witr in the last part, since the prayer of the last part of the night is witnessed and that is better.”¹

However, if he hoped to awaken in the last part of the night, so he left the Witr to pray it then, but he failed to awaken, what does he do?

We say, make it up, but he does not make it up as an odd number, rather he makes it up as an even number. So if it is his habit that he prays three, he should pray four, or if his habit is five, then he should make it up as six, or if his habit is seven, he should make it up as eight, or if his habit is nine, he should make it up as ten, or if his habit is eleven, he should make it up as twelve. That is because it is established from the Prophet (ﷺ) that, “If sleep overcame him, or pain preventing him

¹ Muslim (755).

from arising for the night prayer, he would pray twelve units during the day (in making up).”¹

Form the Sunnah prayers also is the *Duḥa* (mid-morning) prayer, and it is two units, or four, or six, or eight, or ten, or twelve, or whatever you desire, but the minimum is two units.

The time for it is from the point the sun has risen to the level of a spear, to just before the meridian (when the sun is at its highest point in the sky); all that is time for the *Duḥa* prayer.

From its benefits are that which the Prophet (ﷺ) mentioned in his statement, “Upon every *Sulāma* is a charity upon you every day.” ‘*Sulāma*’ are the bones and joints; for every joint there is a charity every day the sun rises. They mention that there are 360 altogether, so upon you is 360 charities every day, and the Prophet (ﷺ) said, “Two units (*Rak’ah*) he bows in the morning compensate for (all) that.”²

This is a tremendous benefit, so instead of examining myself to see, have I performed 360 charities today, I can pray the two units of *Duḥa*, and they suffice upon 360 charities worth.

However, this charity being mentioned is not just charity of wealth only, rather every action that brings the servant closer to Allāh is charity; every *Takbīr* (statement *Allāhu Akbar*) is charity, every *Tahlīl* (statement *Lā Ilāha ill-Allāh*) is charity, every *Tahmīd* (statement *Alhamdulillah*) is charity, enjoining

¹ Muslim (746).

² Muslim (720).

the good is charity, forbidding the evil is charity, removing some harm from the pathway is charity, helping someone is charity, and every action that brings you closer to Allāh from statements and actions, then it is charity.

Chapter 12

Some Rulings of Congregational Prayer

The scholars are agreed that congregational prayer is from the most noble, emphasized, and best of worship. Allāh, the Most High alluded to it in the Qur'ān, and commanded it even in times of fear, so He said:

﴿وَإِذَا كُنْتَ فِيهِمْ فَأَقَمْتَ لَهُمُ الصَّلَاةَ فَلَنْفُخَ طَافِكُهُ مِنْهُمْ مَعَكَ
وَلْيَأْخُذُوا أَسْلِحَتَهُمْ فَإِذَا سَجَدُوا فَلْيَكُونُوا مِنْ وَرَائِكُمْ وَلْتَأْتِ
طَافِكُهُ أُخْرَى لَمْ يُصَلُّوا فَلْيُصَلُّوا مَعَكَ وَلْيَأْخُذُوا حِذْرَهُمْ وَأَسْلِحَتَهُمْ
وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْ تَغَفُلُوا عَنْ أَسْلِحَتِكُمْ﴾

When you (O Messenger Muḥammad) are among them, and lead them in As-Ṣalāh (the prayer), let one party of them stand up [in Ṣalāh (prayer)] with you taking their arms with them; when they finish their prostrations, let them take their positions in the rear and let the other party come up which have not yet prayed, and let them pray with you taking all the precautions and bearing arms. (Al-Nisā: 102)

And in the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) there are many

Aḥādīth indicating the obligation of the congregational prayer, for example:

1 – His statement (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), “By Him, in Whose Hand my soul is, I intended or planned or was about to order for firewood (as fuel) to be collected, and then order someone to make the *adhān* for the prayer, and then order someone to lead the prayer, then I would go from behind and burn the houses of men who did not present themselves for the congregational prayer. By Him, in Whose Hand my soul is in, if any one of them had known that he would get a bone covered with good meat or two small pieces of meat present in between two ribs, he would have turned up for the ‘Ishā prayer.”¹

2 – His statement (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), “Whoever hears the call (*adhān*) and does not attend (the congregational prayer), then there is no prayer for him, except if there is (acceptable) reason.”²

3 – His statement (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) to the blind man who requested from him permission to pray at home, “Do you hear the *adhān* for prayer?” He said, “Yes”. He said, “Respond to it (i.e. go to the mosque in that case).”³

Ibn Mas‘ūd (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) said, “I saw us, and none would stay behind from it – i.e. the congregational prayer – except a hypocrite known for his hypocrisy, and a man would be brought leaning

¹ Bukhārī (644) and Muslim (651).

² Abū Dāwūd (551) and Ibn Mājah (793).

³ Muslim (653).

between (the shoulders) of two men until he is (helped) to stand in the row.”¹

The correct understanding indicates its obligation, for indeed the Islamic *Ummah* [nation] is one *Ummah* [nation], and the perfection of unity is not realized except that the *Ummah* [nation] unites together in its worship. And the most noble, best and emphasized of worship is the prayer. Hence, from the obligations upon the *Ummah* [nation] of Islam is to unite upon this prayer.

The scholars differed (ﷺ) – after having agreed that it is the most emphasized, and most noble [of the acts of] of worship – is it [prayer in congregation] a condition for the correctness (acceptance) of the prayer, or is the prayer correct without it but with sin, and other oppositions? What is correct is that it is obligatory for the prayer, and not a condition for the correctness (validity and acceptance) of the prayer, but whoever leaves it is a sinner, except if he has a legislative reason.

The evidence that it is not a condition for the validity and correctness of the prayer is that the Messenger (ﷺ) gave precedence to the congregational prayer over the individual prayer, and giving this precedence indicates that the individual prayer does have some virtue², and that cannot be unless the

¹ Muslim (654).

² Since giving precedence in Arabic in this manner indicates both items have virtue but one has more, in this case the congregational prayer has

individual prayer (alone, not in congregation) was correct and valid.

In any case, it is obligatory upon every male adult Muslim to attend the congregational prayer, whether that is in travelling or whilst resident.

From the boundaries of what Allāh revealed upon His Messenger are the boundaries (legislations and rulings) of the congregational prayer, whereby boundaries are set upon the Imam and the one being led in congregation, that which are not set upon the one praying alone, and everyone is responsible for what is specific to him (since rules differ in congregation to being alone).

more, but the solitary prayer still has some. Hence it must be valid, otherwise it would have zero virtue.

From the responsibilities upon the Imam leading the prayer:

1 – That he strives to perfect the prayer such that it is like the prayer of the Prophet (ﷺ) when leading the companions (رضي الله عنهم), because it is the most perfect of prayers, and the lightest, just as Anas bin Mālik (رضي الله عنه) said, “I never prayed behind any Imam a prayer lighter and more perfect than behind the Prophet (ﷺ).”¹

If the Imam were praying alone, he would have the choice between sufficing with the minimum requirement of obligations in the prayer, and between performing the highest level (with all Sunnah acts etc.), but when he is leading the congregation he does not have choice in that, rather it is obligatory upon him to take into consideration those behind him, such that they are able to perform the minimum of perfection in their prayer (i.e. he is not to suffice with such a minimum level when leading that those behind him find it difficult to offer the prayer in a sufficiently accurate manner), because the Imam isn't praying for himself only, rather he is praying for himself and has the congregation behind him to consider. Therefore, he must fear Allāh regarding them and not deprive them from performing the minimum of perfection at least.²

¹ Bukhārī (708) and Muslim (469).

² Hence the error of those Imams who hasten in leading to such a degree that those behind cannot even keep up becomes apparent.

If he is able to take it to a higher level (and lead in the manner) of the Prophet (ﷺ) then that is more in perfection and better.

2 – He must strive to ensure the straightening of the rows through speech, and through physical action if verbal instruction does not suffice, and he aligns them by straightening the rows and making them upright. He must emphasize that upon them and warn them of opposition to that, and he straightens them physically with his hand, if verbal instruction does not benefit just as our Prophet (ﷺ), and our Imam and example used to do.

It is reported from Anas (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, “Straighten your rows, as the straightening of rows is essential for the perfection of the prayer.” Bukhārī reported, “...essential for the establishment of the prayer (in a perfect and correct manner).”¹

Abū Dāwūd reported, “Make your rows compact (joined together), and make them close in between, and be level with the necks (aligned, straight).”²

He also reported from the hadith of Ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, “Establish the rows, stand shoulder to shoulder, and close the gaps, and be gentle with your brothers’

¹ Bukhārī (723) and Muslim (433).

² Abū Dāwūd (667).

hands¹, and do not leave gaps for the *Shayṭān*.”² In other words, the gap between two men, for indeed the *Shayṭān* (devil) enters into it between the people of the row.

And the Prophet (ﷺ) said, “Whoever joins a row, Allāh is with him, and whoever cuts (separates) a row, Allāh cuts him off.”³

And in the Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī and Muslim from Anas bin Mālīk (رضي الله عنه) who said, “Once the *Iqāmah* was called and the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) faced us and said, “Straighten your rows and stand closer together...”⁴

It is reported from al-N‘umān b. Bashir (رضي الله عنه) who said, “The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) would straighten our rows to the extent it was as if he was straightening an arrow⁵, until he considered that we became aware of what to do. Then one day he came out and stood (to lead us in prayer), he was about to make the opening *Takbīr*, when he saw a man with his chest protruding out in front from the row, so he said, ‘Straighten

¹ [PN] Abū Dāwūd commented on the meaning of ‘be gentle with your brothers’ hands’ saying: “If a man comes to the row and attempts to enter it, then each person should relax his shoulders so that he may enter the row.”

² Abū Dāwūd (666).

³ Abū Dāwūd (666) and Nasā’ī (820).

⁴ Bukhārī (719) and Muslim (434).

⁵ Referring to: carving the wood of an arrow completely straight in order that it travels through the air with precision to its target, this is an example to highlight how accurately the rows were being straightened.

your rows or Allāh will separate between your faces,'¹ i.e. between your hearts, as in the narration of Abū Dāwūd ².

This is a severe threat upon the one who does not straighten the rows, that Allāh will separate their hearts one from another, so they will differ in their views, and they will lose benefits (of being united) due to the differing.

It is reported from al-Barā' bin 'Āzib who said, "The Prophet (ﷺ) used to go in between the row from side to side, touching our chests and shoulders (to move them to straighten up the row), and say, "Do not be separated, lest your hearts become separated,"³

And al-N'umān b. Bashir (رضي الله عنه) said, "The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) used to straighten our rows when we stood for the prayer, and when we were straight he would make the *Takbīr* (and begin the prayer)⁴.

So look, O Imams, to his statement, "And when we were straight he would make the *Takbīr*," this is a conditional sentence. You find it blatantly clear, that he (ﷺ) would not make *Takbīr* to begin prayer until the rows were straightened. The rightly guided Caliphs and the great Imams who followed the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ)

¹ Bukhārī (717) and Muslim (436); the wording here is that of Muslim.

² Abū Dāwūd (662).

³ Abū Dāwūd (664) and Nasā'ī (812).

⁴ Abū Dāwūd (665).

comprehended that. It is mentioned in *al-Muwatta* (of Imam Mālik) from the leader of the believers 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) that he, “used to command for the rows to be straightened, so when they came and informed him that they have become straightened, he would make *Takbīr*.” And he had appointed men to straighten the rows¹.

Mālik b. Abū 'Āmir said, “I was with 'Uthmān b. 'Affān and the *Iqāmah* for prayer was called, and I was talking to him regarding being allotted a specific allowance from *Bayt al-Māl* [the treasury] and I did not cease talking to him, and he was leveling out the pebbles with his shoes, until some men came to him who he had appointed to straighten the rows, and they informed him that the rows have become straightened, so he said to me, “line up straight in the row”, then he made *Takbīr*.²

So this is the act of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), and his rightly guided Caliphs, that they do not make *Takbīr* for prayer to begin until the rows were straightened, is it not deserving of us therefore that they be an example for us? Is it not deserving of us that we command for the straightening of the rows and their uprightness to occur, and that we wait and do not make *Takbīr* until we see that they have straightened in the manner required, and that we do not fear in that the blame of those who blame us, or the discontent of those who become displeased and restless (because of the delay in starting prayer

¹ Malik in *al-Muwatta* (422).

² Mālik in *al-Muwatta* (423).

due to straightening the rows)? However, with regret, many of the Imams – may Allāh open up the affairs for us and them – do not give importance to this matter, and the best they do is simply say it as a habitual statement: 'Straighten up, line up level.' So they do not realize the point behind it (and importance of it), and they do not care if the congregation does not follow that instruction. You find the Imam say these words that are uttered upon his tongue habitually, and the congregation remains upon the crookedness of their rows, and the distancing between themselves, and if the Imam realized the real point and looked at the rows with his eyes and waited until he saw that they have straightened properly, then he made the *Takbīr*, that would fulfill the right upon him, and he would exit from the responsibility.

These are some of the responsibilities of the Imam in his role.

As for the one praying alone, he has a choice between sufficing with the minimum obligation in his prayer, or he can elongate it (fulfilling all the Sunnah acts), even though it is better that he observes the Sunnah acts. However, when an individual is praying behind the Imam (he is being led in congregation), then his prayer is now connected to the prayer of the Imam, so it is not permissible for him to go ahead of the Imam in saying the *Takbīr*, or standing, or sitting, or bowing, or prostrating – and neither is he allowed to even be alongside the Imam in the actions exactly. Rather, he is required to be after him following him, and he must not lag behind (must

stay closely behind the imam in following the actions of the prayer). The Prophet (ﷺ) said, “Isn’t he who raises his head before the Imam afraid that Allāh may transform his head into that of a donkey? Or that Allāh makes his appearance that of a donkey?”¹

He also said, “The Imam is appointed to be followed, so do not differ from him, bow when he bows, and say ‘*Rabbana lakal-Hamd*’ when he says ‘*Sami‘ Allāhu liman Ḥamidahu*, and if he prostrates, prostrate (after him), and if he offers prayer sitting, then offer the prayer sitting all together, and straighten the rows for the prayer, since the straightening of the rows is from the perfection of the prayer.”²

¹ Bukhārī (691) and Muslim (427).

² Bukhārī (722) and Muslim (414).

Further Responsibilities of the Imam:

1 – Guarding over straightening the rows

He warns of the punishment for the one who does not straighten them, he guards over them being compact, the gaps being closed, and ensuring closeness between them, and their connection by completing the first row then those that follow. [And he warns] of the punishment for breaking the rows, for the one who cuts the rows (does not join together and complete them properly) then Allāh cuts him off.

In the two Ṣaḥīḥ collections of al-Bukhārī and Muslim it is reported from Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, “If the people knew the reward for doing the *adhān*, and for standing in the first row (in the congregational prayers), and found no other way to get that except by drawing lots they would draw lots...”¹ If they knew the goodness and reward attached to the *adhān* and first row, they would draw lots to decide who can be in them.

And he (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, “The best rows for men are the first ones, and the worst of them are the last ones.”²

¹ Bukhārī (615) and Muslim (437).

² Muslim (440).

And he (ﷺ) said, “Complete the first row, then the one that follows it, whatever space is left (i.e. an incomplete row), then let it be in the last row.”¹

It is reported from Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī, “That the Prophet (ﷺ) saw some of his companions staying behind (toward the back).” In one wording of the hadith, “He saw a group toward the back of the mosque, so he said to them, ‘Come forward and complete with me (the rows straight after me), and the ones behind you follow you, and a group does not cease to lag behind except that Allāh causes them to be behind (in a greater sense in their affairs)’”.²

So are you pleased for yourself, O Muslim, that you are in the worst of rows – and they are the last rows – despite your ability to be in the first of them? Are you pleased that you present yourself to punishment by staying back from the first rows until Allāh causes you to fall back in all situations of goodness? Are you pleased with yourself that you do not line up before your Lord as the angels line up before their Lord, they are joined together in the rows and they complete the first rows?³

There is no person that is pleased for himself with that, except that he is pleased with loss for himself (if he was pleased with the aforementioned matters). So come forward, and complete

¹ Abū Dāwūd (671).

² Muslim (438).

³ Muslim (430).

the front rows first, and be joined in them, and be level in them, and be gentle with your brothers' hands¹. If they pull you over to straighten the row, or to make it compact,[then do so] so that you complete your prayer and emulate the example of your Prophet (ﷺ), and follow in the footsteps of your righteous Salaf.

An issue:

If three or more came together and prayed congregationally, then the Imam steps forward (and stands ahead of them), if they were praying on a rug or carpet or something similar, where limited space does not allow for the Imam to be ahead of the remainder, then they line up together in one row alongside the Imam, to his right and left, and the Imam is in between them.

Many people with regards to this issue – if they needed to line up with the Imam – you find them all lining up to his right, and this is in opposition to the Sunnah, rather the Sunnah is that they be to his right and left.

If however, there was only one other person with the Imam, then he stands to the right of the Imam, just as the Prophet (ﷺ) did with 'Abdullah b. 'Abbās. In this scenario when there is just the Imam and one other person, then the Imam is to be level with the other person he is leading; he is not to go ahead of him, neither a small amount or large, because they are

¹ [PN] The meaning of this has been discussed earlier.

both (considered as) one row, and the Sunnah regarding the row is that the people be level in it.

In relation to people lining up together in the rows, there is an issue that the people of knowledge have differed in, and that is regarding praying alone behind the row, (i.e. all the rows are complete and only one solitary individual remains who cannot fit in anywhere, so he stands by himself behind the last complete row, as a 'row' by himself). Is the prayer of an individual who lines up alone behind the rows valid?

The people of knowledge differed, so there are some who consider that his prayer is valid, and some of them consider his prayer is invalid absolutely. Then there are some who considered a greater level of detail to the matter, and said that if a person came and found the row complete with no space for him in it, then he prays alone behind that last row as part of the congregation behind the Imam and his prayer is valid and there is no issue upon him due to the statement of Allāh:

﴿فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ﴾

So keep your duty to Allāh and fear Him as much as you can (Al-Taghābun: 16).

And this person feared Allāh to the best of his ability, because there is nothing more he could have done, (if the rows are complete and he cannot fit, then he has no choice but to pray alone as a 'row'). This statement is the most correct, and

typically the middle statement is often the likeliest to being accurate and strongest.

There is no doubt that his praying with the Imam alone behind the rows is better than praying independently outside of the rows and congregation altogether by himself.

So in this scenario, if he saw the row fully complete, he must not pull someone out of the row in front of him (so that he is no longer alone and his row now has two people hence making certain of the validity of his prayer in that congregation), since pulling someone back from the row has three dangers:

1 – A gap will open up in that row, so he is considered as having cut that row, and whoever breaks a row, Allāh cuts that person off.

2 – If he pulls him back from a row further ahead, then he will be pulling that person back from a superior place to an inferior place, this is transgression upon him.

3 – If he pulls him back, he will pre-occupy that person's heart and necessitate physical movement in his prayer, so the heart and body of that person he pulls back will be disturbed, and this will cause the loss of that prayer upon him (i.e. his focus disturbed).

All these problematic issues have no need for them in this scenario, because this man who came and found the rows

completely full, has the obligation of lining up in the rows dropped in that case, just like other religious obligations that are dropped legislatively or physically in the presence of valid reasoning.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymīyah (رحمته الله) - from among those who took this opinion - said, "Due to this because there is no space for women in the rows of men it is permissible for her to pray alone behind the rows due to the impossibility of her standing in the rows of men legislatively, and the one who is excused due to impossibility physically is like the one who is excused due to impossibility legislatively. This is evidence, and it is clear analogical evidence."

Some people may say: Is it not permissible for him, or isn't it obligatory upon him to go forward to line up alongside the Imam? We say no, he does not do that because that will end up with the following issues:

- 1 - The people will appear to have two Imams, since there would be two men in front of them, what is legislated is that the Imam be alone in the row, as one row himself.
- 2 - He will have to end up harming those in front of him by having to tread through them until he arrives at the Imam, and that is another wrong.
- 3 - If he prays alone (after the last row) then another person may end up coming and joining him, but if he went forth to join the Imam, and another person arrived, then that person

would be left alone without anyone to line up with, and so if he went forth up to the Imam too, that would make three of them in the row of the Imam.

The point is that the one who comes and the row is completely full, then he is to pray alone with the congregation behind the last row, and he is not to pull someone back, nor to go forth and line up with the Imam, and indeed Allāh said:

﴿فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ﴾

So keep your duty to Allāh and fear Him as much as you can. (al-Taghābun n: 16)

As we are on this subject, I would like to clarify that when some people put forth the deceased in front of the Imam (for *Janāzah* prayer), they line up alongside the Imam for no reason, and this is in opposition to the Sunnah; rather the Sunnah is that the Imam stands ahead alone behind the deceased, and those who brought the deceased forward stand back in the rows with the people. If there is no space for them, then they line up between the Imam and the first row due to the call of need in the situation, and if there is not enough space between the Imam and the first row then they line up to the right and the left of the Imam.

An Issue:

It is not permissible for anyone who sees a child to exit him from the mosque unless there was harm upon the mosque or

the people praying in it (in the presence of that child and his activities).

An Issue:

It is not permissible for anyone to pull back a child from the (front) row to exit him from the mosque or place him in the second row, because whoever arrives at a place in the mosque first has more right to it.

As for the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ) “Those of understanding and intellect should be behind me.”¹ (i.e. in the first row), then that is encouragement for the grown educated men to come forward to the place (in the first row behind the Imam) so that they be the ones directly behind the Messenger (ﷺ).

If that were not the meaning of the hadith, then it would be in contradiction with the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ), “Whoever arrives first to water, and no-one has preceded him, then it is for him.”²

Based upon this, if children get to the virtuous places first then they are more deserving of them, and it is not permissible for anyone to move them back, and if someone wants to be at the front then he should leave his work and pre-occupations and go to the mosque (early). As for him finding a child and moving him back, then this will cause the child to leave off

¹ Muslim (432)

² Abū Dāwūd (3071).

and go away from the mosques, and the child will hate the man who removed him from his place. Rather he may even dislike the prayer altogether, so the man would be the cause of this.

I would like to point out a very dangerous matter, most people are negligent of it, and that is the issue of following the Imam. Following the Imam is very important, to the extent that on one occasion the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) prayed sitting, and his companions prayed standing, so he indicated to them to sit, yet they were able to stand. Despite the fact that they were commanded to sit to actualize the following of the Imam. And know that the one being led with regards to his Imam leading him can be in one of four states:

1st State – [He is] ahead of him, such that he performs something before the Imam, so if he said the *Takbīrat al-Ihrām* (opening Allāhu Akbar) before the Imam, his prayer does not even begin and is invalid, and if he rises up (from bowing) before the Imam purposely his prayer is invalidated. If he prostrates before the Imam purposely his prayer is invalidated, and if he stands up from prostration before the Imam purposely his prayer is invalidated, due to the statement of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), “The Imam is appointed to be followed, so when he makes *Takbīr* (says *Allāhu Akbar*) then you make *Takbīr*, and when he bows, you bow...”¹

¹ Bukhārī (722) and Muslim (414).

And he said, "Isn't he who raises his head before the Imam afraid that Allāh may transform his head into that of a donkey, or his appearance into that of a donkey?"¹

The point is the physical appearance and head because that is greater (in impact), when he rises up before his Imam, suddenly he is a braying donkey.

If someone says: Is that possible? We say, yes. Allāh the Most High said:

﴿وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمُ الَّذِينَ اعْتَدَوْا مِنْكُمْ فِي السَّبْتِ فَقُلْنَا لَهُمْ كُونُوا قِرَدَةً

خَاسِيَةً ﴿٦٥﴾

"And indeed you knew those amongst you who transgressed in the matter of the Sabbath (i.e. Saturday). We said to them: "Be you monkeys, despised and rejected." (Al-Baqarah: 65)

And Allāh said:

﴿قُلْ هَلْ أَنْبِئُكُمْ بِشَرٍّ مِنْ ذَلِكَ مَثُوبَةً عِنْدَ اللَّهِ مَنْ لَعَنَهُ اللَّهُ وَغَضِبَ عَلَيْهِ وَجَعَلَ

مِنْهُمْ الْقِرَدَةَ وَالْخَنَازِيرَ ﴿٦٦﴾

"Say (O Muḥammad to the people of the Scripture): "Shall I inform you of something worse than that, regarding the recompense from Allāh: those (Jews) who incurred the Curse of Allāh and His Wrath, those of

¹ Bukhārī (691) and Muslim (427).

whom (some) He transformed into monkeys and swine...”

And Allāh is all-capable over all things, and perhaps Allāh would transform his head into the head of a donkey, the body is a human body and the head is a donkey's head; this is possible, because Allāh is all-capable over all things.

Some scholars claimed that the meaning is Allāh will make his appearance that of a donkey, meaning he becomes an imbecilic idiotic individual like a donkey; hence the ‘appearance’ and ‘head’ being transformed here are metaphoric.

2nd State – [He is] equal and on-par with the Imam. Meaning, you bow exactly with your Imam, you prostrate exactly with your Imam, you stand exactly with your Imam...the scholars said this is disliked (*makrūh*), except in the opening *Takbīr* where it is prohibited, and the prayer would not commence in that case. Some scholars said it is prohibited altogether due to the statement of the Messenger (ﷺ), “Do not bow until he (the Imam) bows”¹, (indicating you bow after the Imam, not exactly along with him), and this is closer to the truth.

3rd State – Lagging far behind, i.e. that he lags behind significantly. For example, the Imam bows (goes into *rukū'*) and this person is still standing, the Imam rises from the prostration and this one is still in prostration. Some people do this especially a lot in the second prostration, when the Imam

¹ Bukhārī (722) and Muslim (414).

rises up to recite (in next unit now), you find people elongating the prostration and making supplication to Allāh. Maybe the Imam even gets to half way into reciting al-Fātiḥah or completes it and he is still prostrating, and this is a mistake, in opposition to the command of the Messenger (ﷺ). He (ﷺ) said, “When he prostrates then prostrate, and when he bows then bow...”¹ so he commanded us to follow the Imam, and not to lag behind.

If he does lag behind, so much so that he misses a complete pillar then his prayer is invalidated, but if he catches up whilst he is still in that pillar then it is valid, but it is in opposition to what is legislated.

An example of missing a complete pillar: If the Imam bowed (went into *rukū'*) and rose up and you have not even bowed yet, we say: you have lagged behind substantially and your prayer is invalidated, unless it was for valid reasoning, for example if the Imam bows and you did not hear his voice, so when he said '*Sami' Allāhu liman Ḥamidahu*' (and you hear that), then you know he has bowed. [In this case] we say bow and rise up and continue following your Imam from there.

Whereas, if this occurred to some people, they leave the bowing out altogether, and if he left the bowing then his unit (*rak'ah*) is invalid. So we say bow and then follow the Imam, because you are excused (due to not hearing the Imam).

¹ Bukhārī (378) and Muslim (411).

If however, he lagged behind without reason until the Imam bowed and rose up, then his prayer is invalidated.

4th State – Following the Imam, such that he does not lag behind, nor go ahead, nor be exactly equal, rather he performs the actions just after the Imam does.

An example of that: When the Imam says in the opening *Takbīr*, '*Allāhu Akbar*', the one being led makes *Takbīr* without delay (straight after him). He is considered as 'following' the Imam.

When the Imam bows and is in the full position of bowing (*rukū'*), the one being led bows without delay. He is considered as 'following' the Imam.

When the Imam prostrates and reaches the ground, the one being led prostrates without delay. He is considered as 'following' the Imam.

When the Imam rises up and reaches the position of fully upright, the one being led rises up without delay. He is considered as 'following' the Imam.

However, is the key the '*Takbīr*' (when he says *Allāhu Akbar* to go into next part of the prayer) of the Imam, or the actual movement?

The answer: The key is the actual movement, except if you cannot see him, in which case you are excused. If the Imam said '*Allāhu Akbar*' to go into prostration, and he finishes

saying the *Takbīr* before reaching the ground, then do not prostrate yet, al-Barā' b. 'Āzib said, "When the Messenger (ﷺ) used to say, '*Sami' Allāhu liman Ḥamidahu*', none from us would bend his back until the Prophet (ﷺ) would be upon the ground in prostration, then we would prostrate after him."¹ These are the manners.

Therefore, the key is the action itself, but sometimes a person may be far away and cannot see the Imam, in this case the key is the voice due to the statement of Allāh:

﴿فَأَتُوا اللَّهَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ﴾

"So keep your duty to Allāh and fear Him as much as you can (at-Taghābun n: 16)"

This is the best of my ability (in a situation where you cannot see the Imam, you must go by the voice). Due to this it is befitting of the Imam to make the end of his *Takbīr* upon arriving at the pillar², so he should not cut the *Takbīr* before arriving at the pillar, because people are following him.

Due to this, pillars and obligations can be dropped in order to maintain the following of the Imam, and the prayer can be increased in order to maintain the following.

¹ Bukhārī (747).

² For instance, the end of the *Takbīr* to go into prostration should be upon arriving at the ground.

Pillars are dropped if, for example, you came and found the Imam bowing, so you make the opening *Takbīr* and go straight into bowing. Recitation of al-Fātiḥah is dropped – and it is a pillar – for the sake of maintaining the following.

An obligation could be dropped too if, for example, the Imam rose up from the first *tashahhud* forgetfully (without sitting for it), then it is obligatory upon you to rise up too and stand, so you leave the obligation (sitting for the first *tashahhud* in this example), purposely, all of that is for the sake of maintaining following the Imam.

You can increase in the prayer if, for example, you entered and the Imam was in the second unit (*rak'ah*) of Dhuhr prayer, and so the Imam sits for the *tashahhud*, so this sitting here is an addition (since you have just entered the prayer and have no legislated sitting in the first unit), you have added it purposely to maintain the following.

If the Imam forgot and did not say, '*Subḥāna Rabbī al-'Ala*' in the prostration, then it is obligatory upon him to prostrate for forgetfulness because he has left an obligation. The Imam would prostrate for forgetfulness and you are not aware of the reason, since '*Subḥāna Rabbī al-'Ala*' is said quietly, so he personally forgot it and left it and he prostrated for forgetfulness before he gives the final Salām. You follow him in that as an obligation upon you, despite the fact that the reason for this prostration is not actually even known to you (and did not relate to your forgetfulness).

If, for instance, the Imam increased in the prayer, then the prostration for forgetfulness is to be after the *Salām*. An example of that: An Imam prostrated three times in a given unit (*rak'ah*), so he prostrates after the final *Salām*. It is obligatory upon you to give the final *Salām* and also prostrate with him and then when he gives the *Salām* after the prostrations, you give *Salām* too.

Hence, following the Imam is an important affair, it is not permissible for a person to ever fall short in that regard, because even obligations and pillars are dropped due to maintaining it, and it is permissible to add something into the prayer to maintain it.

Look at the understanding (*fiqh*) of our Imams (رحمهم الله). Imam Aḥmad (رحمهم الله) did not used to consider the legislation of *Qunūt* in Fajr prayer as correct, he used to consider *Qunūt* in the Fajr prayer as an innovation, despite that he definitively states that if someone was being led by an imam who does read the *Qunūt* in Fajr prayer, that he must follow him and say 'Ameen' after the supplications in it; all this so that opposition (to the Imam) does not occur.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymīyah (رحمهم الله) definitively stated in his '*Fatāwá*', that if the person being led held the opinion

¹ (22/451).

regarding the legislation of the sitting of rest¹, the brief sitting that occurs before rising up to the second and fourth unit (*rak'ah*), but the Imam does not sit, then it is better that he does not sit to be in conformity with the Imam (the opposite applies to). If the Imam held the opinion that the sitting is legislated but the one being led did not, then it is better for the one being led to follow the Imam and sit, hence following the Imam is an important affair.

An Issue: The correct opinion is that what is made up by someone who enters the prayer late is the end of his prayer, due to the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ) (regarding the one who comes late), "Whatever you make it for pray, and whatever you miss complete it."²

And in one narration, "...and whatever you miss, then make it up".³

'Making it up' here means to complete (what you didn't catch with the Imam), since 'making up' '*Qaḍā'*', can sometimes mean 'to complete', just like in the statement of Allāh the Most High:

﴿فَقَضَّاهُنَّ سَبْعَ سَعَوَاتٍ﴾

¹ The brief sitting after the second prostration in the 1st and 3rd unit before rising up.

² Bukhārī (636) and Muslim (602).

³ Aḥmad (2/238).

Then He completed and finished from their creation (as) seven heavens. (Fuṣṣilat: 12)

The benefit of this is if we say what he makes up is the latter part of his prayer, then if he catches two units of Dhuhr for example, if he is able he can add the recitation of another *surah* after al-Fātiḥah in the two units he prays with the Imam. That is because the last two units the Imam prays they are actually the first two units of the one who entered late, so he can recite further Qur'ān after al-Fātiḥah if he is able, then the two remaining units he makes up after the Imam finishes, he only recites al-Fātiḥah.

Upon the second opinion, the affair is inverted, we say what you catch with the Imam do not add anymore recitation after al-Fātiḥah, and what you make up after the Salām (of the Imam) recite al-Fātiḥah and a further *Surah*.

The stronger opinion is what we mentioned, as indicated by the fact that if he caught the Imam for the last unit of Maghrib prayer, when the Imam gives *Salām*, then he will stand and pray one unit and then sit for his first *tashahhud* (since he is at the end of his second unit altogether now), then he stands and prays the last unit.

So if we were to say that what he makes up is the first part of his prayer, then it would necessitate that if he catches one unit of Maghrib with the Imam, then after the Imam gives the final *Salām*, he must stand, pray another unit and not sit, because

what he has missed are two consecutive units without a sitting between them, so it is necessitated that he pray two units without a sitting.

No one says this, not even the ones who hold the opinion that what is made up is the first part of the prayer. In any case, the strongest opinion is that what he (the one who is late into the congregational prayer) makes up is the last part of his prayer.

Since we are on this subject, I would like to point out a dangerous matter. Some people who join in late rise up after the Imam gives the first *Salām*, before he has given the second *Salām*; this is dangerous because the Imam has not in reality finished his prayer until he gives the second *Salām*. The Messenger (ﷺ) said, "What you miss, then make it up." So long as the Imam has still not given the second *Salām* too then you are still connected to him (and the congregational prayer, so you should not stand up to complete what you missed yet, until he gives the second *Salām* too).

[This concludes the translation of the book. May Allāh bless the author, the translator, and the reader.]



Glossary

A

Āyah: (pl. *āyāt*) "sign," a verse of the *Qur'ān*.

Āhād: a narration which has not reached the level of *mutawātir*.

Ahādīth: see *hadīth*.

'Alayhis-salām: "may Allāh (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى) protect and preserve him." It is said after the name of a Prophet of Allāh or after the name of an Angel.

Anṣār: "helpers;" the Muslims of al-Madīnah who supported the Muslims who migrated from Makkah.

'Arsh: Throne of Allāh (جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ).

'Aṣr: the afternoon Prayer.

Awliyā': see *Walī*.

B

Bid'ah: Heresy (any innovatory practice).

Burāq: An animal bigger than a donkey and smaller than a horse on which the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) went for the *Mi'rāj*.

D

Dā'i: one engaged in *da'wah*, caller.

Da'aef: "weak," unauthentic narration.

Da'wah: invitation, call to Allāh (عُرْوَجَلَّ).

Dīn: a completed way of life prescribed by Allāh (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى).

Dhikr: (pl. *adhkār*) remembrance of Allāh (جَلَّوَعَلَا) with the heart, sayings of the tongue and actions of our limbs.

E

Īmān: faith, to affirm all that was revealed to the Prophet (صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ).

F

Fāhish: one who uses foul language.

Fard Kifāyah: collective obligation - if fulfilled by a part of the community then the rest are not obligated.

Fatwā: (pl. *fatāwā*) religious verdicts.

Faqīh: A scholar who can give religious verdicts.

Fiqh: Islāmic jurisprudence, understanding.

Fitnah: (pl. *fitan*) Trials, persecution, conflicts and strifes.

Fitrah: the natural disposition that one is born upon.

G

Ghulū: going to an extreme.

Ghusl: A ceremonial bath necessary for the one who is in a state of *Janābah*.

H

Hadīth: (pl. *ahādīh*) the saying, actions and approvals narrated from the Prophet (صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ).

Halāl: lawful.

Hanīf: pure Islāmic Monotheism (worshipping Allāh alone and nothing else).

Harām: unlawful and forbidden.

Hasan: fine, good; a term used for an authentic *hadīth*, which does not reach the level of *Sahīh*.

Harj: killing.

Al-Harūriyyah: an especially un-orthodox religious sect that branched off from the *Khawārij*.

Hijrah: migration from the land of *Shirk* to the land of Islām.

Hukm: a judgment of legal decision (especially of Allāh).

I

'Ibādah: worship, worship of Allāh.

Ihsān: worshipping Allāh as though you see Him. However, since you cannot see Him, then know that He sees you.

Ijmā': consensus, a unified opinion of Scholars regarding a certain issue.

Ijtihād: exertion of effort; the process of arriving at a reasoned decision by a Scholar on an issue.

Imām: leaders; leaders in Prayer, knowledge in *fiqh*, leader of a state.

Isnād: the chain of narrators linking the collector of the saying to the person quoted.

Istikhārah: a Prayer consisting of two units (*rak'ah*) asking Allāh for guidance.

Istiwā: ascending; the ascending of Allāh above the Throne (in the manner that befits His Majesty).

J

Janābah: state of a person after having sexual intercourse or sexual discharge.

Janāzah: (pl. *janā'iz*): Funeral.

Jihād: striving, struggling, fighting to make the Word of Allāh supreme.

Jum'ah: Friday.

Jinn: invisible creation, created by Allāh from smokeless fire.

Junub: a person who is in the state of *janābah*.

K

Ka'bah: a square stone building in *al-Masjidul-Haram* (the great mosque in Makkah which Muslims go to for pilgrimage and which all Muslims direct their face in Prayer).

Al-Kabā'ir: the major sins.

Khārijī: (pl. *Khawārij*): those who declared that a Muslim becomes a disbeliever due to committing a major sin alone.

Khalīfah: (pl. *khulafā'*): the head of the Islāmic government to whom the oath of allegiance is given.

Khilāfah: an Islāmic state.

Khutbah: (person *khatīb*), religious talk (sermon).

Kufr: (person *kāfir*) act of disbelief in the Religion of Islām.

M

Madhhab: position or opinion of a Scholar; school of Islāmic Jurisprudence.

Makrūh: not approved of, undesirable from the point of view of Religion, although not pun'ishable.

Manhaj: way; method; methodology.

Marfū': raised; a narration attributed to the Prophet (ﷺ).

Masjid: mosque.

Mawbiqāt: great destructive sins.

Mudallis: one who practises *tadlīs*.

Muhājir: (pl. *muhājirūn*, *muhājirīn*) one who migrated from the land of the disbelievers to the land of the Muslims for the sake of Allāh.

Muhaddith: scholar of the science of *hadīth*.

Muftī: one who gives *fatāwā*.

Mujāhid: (pl. *mujāhidūn*): a Muslim warrior in *Jihād*.

Mujtahid: one who is qu'Alified to pass judgment using *ijtihād*.

Munkar: "rejected;" a narration which is un-authentic itself and contradicts and authentic narrations.

Muqallid: one who practices *taqlid*.

Mushrik: (pl. *mushrikūn*) polytheists, pagans and disbelievers in the oneness of Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) and His Messenger (صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ).

Mustahabb: recommended; an action if left it is not pun'ishable and if done it is rewardable.

Muttaqūn: those who are pious.

Mutawātir: a *hadīth* which is narrated by a very large number of narrators, such that it cannot be supported that they all agreed upon a lie.

Muwahhid: (pl. *muwahhidūn*) one who unifies all of his worship and directs it to Allāh alone.

Mawdū': fabricated; spurious; invented (narration).

Mawqūf: stopped; a narration from a Companion (not going back to the Prophet (صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ)).

Mawsūl: "connected;" a continuous *isnād* (can be narrated back to the Prophet (صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ)).

N

Nāfilah: (pl. *nawāfil*) Optional practice of worship.

Niyyah: intention from the heart.

Nusuk: a sacrifice.

Q

Qadar: Divine pre-ordainment; that which Allāh has ordained for his creation.

Qiblah: the direction the Muslims face during Prayer.

Qiyās: analogical deduction of Islāmic laws. New laws are deduced from old laws based upon similarity between their causes.

Qunūt: "devotion;" a special supplication while standing in the Prayer.

Quraysh: one of the greatest tribes in Arabia in the pre-Islāmic period of Ignorance. The Prophet (ﷺ) belonged to this tribe.

R

Rāfidī: the correct title for the extreme *Shi'ah*. Those who bear m'Alīce and grudges against the noble Companions (رضي الله عنهم) to the extent that they declare them to be apostates. They also hold that the *Qur'ān* which the Muslims have is neither complete nor preserved from corruption.

Ramadān: the ninth month of Islāmic calendar, in which Muslims observe fasting.

S

Sahābah: Muslims who met the Prophet (ﷺ) believing in him and died believing in him.

Sahīh: authentic, the highest rank of classification of authentic *ahādīth*.

Salaf/Salafus-Sālihīn: pious predecessors; the Muslims of the first three generations: the Companions, the successors and their successors.

Salafī: one who ascribes oneself to the *salaf* and follows their way.

Sirah: the life story of the Prophet (ﷺ).

Sharī'ah: the divine code of law of Islām.

Shawwāl: the month after *Ramadān*.

Shaytān: S'Aṭān

Shi'ah: (see *Rāfidī*) a collective name for various sects claiming love for *Ahlul-Bayt*.

Shirk: associating partners with Allāh directly or indirectly; compromising any aspects of *Tawhīd*.

Sūrah: a chapter of the *Qur'ān*

Sunnah : "example, practice;" the way of life of the Prophet (ﷺ), consisting of his words, actions and silent approvals. The *Sunnah* is contained in various *ahādīth*.

T

Tābi'ī: (pl. *tābi'īn*) the generation that came after the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ).

Tafsīr: explanation of the *Qur'ān*.

Tāghūt: anything worshiped other than the real God (Allāh) (i.e. false deities).

Tahajjud: voluntary, recommended Prayer between the compulsory prayers of *'Ishā'* and *Fajr*.

Takhrīj: to reference a *hadīth* to its sources and analyze its *isnāds*.

Taqlīd: blind following; to follow someone's opinion (*madhhab*) without evidence.

Taqwā: acting in obedience to Allāh, hoping for His mercy upon light from Him and *taqwā* is leaving acts of disobedience, out of fear of Him, upon light from Him.

Tarjamah: notes about a reporter of *hadīth*.

Tawwāf: the circumambulation of the *Ka'bah*.

Tawhīd: Islāmic Monotheism. The Oneness of Allāh. Believing and acting upon His Lordship, His rights of Worship and Names and Attributes.

U

Uhud: A well known mountain in al-Madīnah. One of the greatest battles in Islāmic history came at its foot. This is called *Ghazwah Uhud*.

'Ulamā': (singular: *'ālim*) scholars.

Umm: mother of, used as an identification.

Ummah [nation]: "nation", the Muslims as a whole.

'Umrah: a visit to Makkah during which one performs the *tawwāf* around the *Ka'bah* and the *Sa'ī* between *as-Safā* and *al-Marwah*. It is called the lesser *Hajj*.

Usūl: the fundamentals.

W

Wahyī: the revelation or inspiration of Allāh to His Prophets.

Wahdatul-Wujūd: the belief that everything in existence is infact Allāh. This deviant belief is held by many *Sūfīs*.

Wakīl: disposer of affairs.

Witr: "odd;" the last Prayer at the night, which consists of odd number of *raka'āt* (units).

Walimah: the wedding feast.

Wasīlah: the means of approach or achieving His closeness to Allāh by getting His favours.

Wudū': an ablution (ritual washing) that is performed before Prayer and other kinds of worship.

Y

Yaqīn: perfect absolute faith.

Yathrib: one of the names of al-Madīnah.

Z

Zakāt: charity that is obligatory on everyone who has wealth over and above a certain limit over which a year has passed (2.5% of saved wealth).

Zakātul-Fitr: an obligatory charity by the Muslims to be given to the poor before the Prayer of *'Īdul-Fitr*.

Zamzam: the sacred water inside the *haram* (the grand mosque) at Makkah.

Zanādiqah: atheists, heretics.

Our Call to the Ummah [nation]

[1]: We believe in Allāh and His Names and Attributes, as they were mentioned in the Book of Allāh and in the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), without *tahṛīf* (distortion), nor *ta'wīl* (figurative interpretation), nor *tamthīl* (making a likeness), nor *tashbīh* (resemblance), nor *ta'tīl* (denial).

[2]: We love the Companions (رضي الله عنهم) of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), and we hate those who speak against them. We believe that to speak ill of them is to speak ill of the Religion, because they are the ones who conveyed it to us. And we love the Family of the Prophet (ﷺ) with love that is permitted by the *Sharī'ah*.

[3]: We love the People of *Ḥadīth* and all of the *Salaf* of the *Ummah [nation]* from *Ahl al-Sunnah*. Imām al-Shāṭibī (d.790H) - رحمه الله - said, "The *Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ*, the Companions, the *Tābi'ūn* and their successors knew the *Qur'ān*, its sciences and its meanings the best."

[4]: We despise *'ilm al-kalām* (knowledge of theological rhetoric), and we view it to be from amongst the greatest reasons for the division in the *Ummah [nation]*.

[5]: We do not accept anything from the books of *fiqh* (jurisprudence), nor from the books of *Tafsīr* (explanation of the *Qur'ān*), nor from the ancient stories, nor from the *Sīrah* (biography) of the Prophet (ﷺ), except that which has been confirmed from Allāh or from His Messenger (ﷺ).

We do not mean that we have rejected them, nor do we claim that we are not in need of them. Rather, we benefit from the discoveries of our Scholars and the jurists and other than them. However, we do not accept a ruling, except with an authentic proof.

[6]: We do not write in our books, nor do we cover in our lessons, nor do we give sermons with anything except the *Qur'ān*, or the authentic and authoritative *ḥadīth*. And we detest what emanates from many books and admonishers in terms of false stories and weak and fabricated *aḥādīth*.

[7]: We do not perform *Takfīr* upon any Muslim due to any sin, except *Shirk* with Allāh, or the abandonment of Prayer, or apostasy. We seek refuge in Allāh from that.

[8]: We believe that the *Qur'ān* is the Speech of Allāh, it is not created.

[9]: We hold that our 'obligation is to co-operate with the group that traverses the methodology of the Book and the *Sunnah*, and what the *Salaf* of the *Ummah* [nation] were upon; in terms of calling to Allāh (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى), and being sincere in worship of Him, and warning from *Shirk*, innovations, and disobedience, and to advise all of the groups that oppose this.' 'So co-operating upon righteousness and piety (*taqwā*) and mutual advising necessitates warning against evil and not co-operating with the wicked.'

[10]: We do not deem it correct to revolt against the Muslim rulers as long as they are Muslims, nor do we feel that

revolutions bring about reconciliation. Rather, they corrupt the community.

[I1]: We hold that this multiplicity of present day parties is a reason for the division of the Muslims and their weakness. So therefore we set about 'freeing the minds from the fetters of blind-following and the darkness of sectarianism and party spirit.'

[I2]: We restrict our understanding of the Book of Allāh and of the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) to the understanding of the *Salaf* of the *Ummah* [nation] from the Scholars of *ḥadīth*, not the blind-followers of their individuals. Rather, we take the truth from wherever it comes. And we know that there are those who claim *Salafīyah*, yet *Salafīyah* is free from them, since they bring to the society what Allāh has prohibited. We believe in 'cultivating the young generation upon this Islām, purified from all that we have mentioned, giving to them a correct Islamic education from the start - without any influence from the disbelieving western education.'

[I3]: We believe that politics is a part of the Religion, and those who try to separate the Religion from politics are only attempting to destroy the Religion and to spread chaos.

[I4]: We believe there will be no honor or victory for the Muslims until they return to the Book of Allāh and to the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ).

[15]: We oppose those who divide the Religion into trivi'Alities and important issues. And we know that this is a destructive *Da'wah*.

[16]: We oppose those who put down the knowledge of the *Sunnah* , and say that this is not the time for it. Likewise, we oppose those who put down acting upon the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ).

[17]: Our *Da'wah* and our *'Aqidah* is more beloved to us than our own selves, our wealth and our offspring. So we are not prepared to part with it for gold, nor silver. We say this so that no one may have hope in buying out our *Da'wah*, nor should he think that it is possible for him to purchase it from us for *dīnār* or *dirham*.

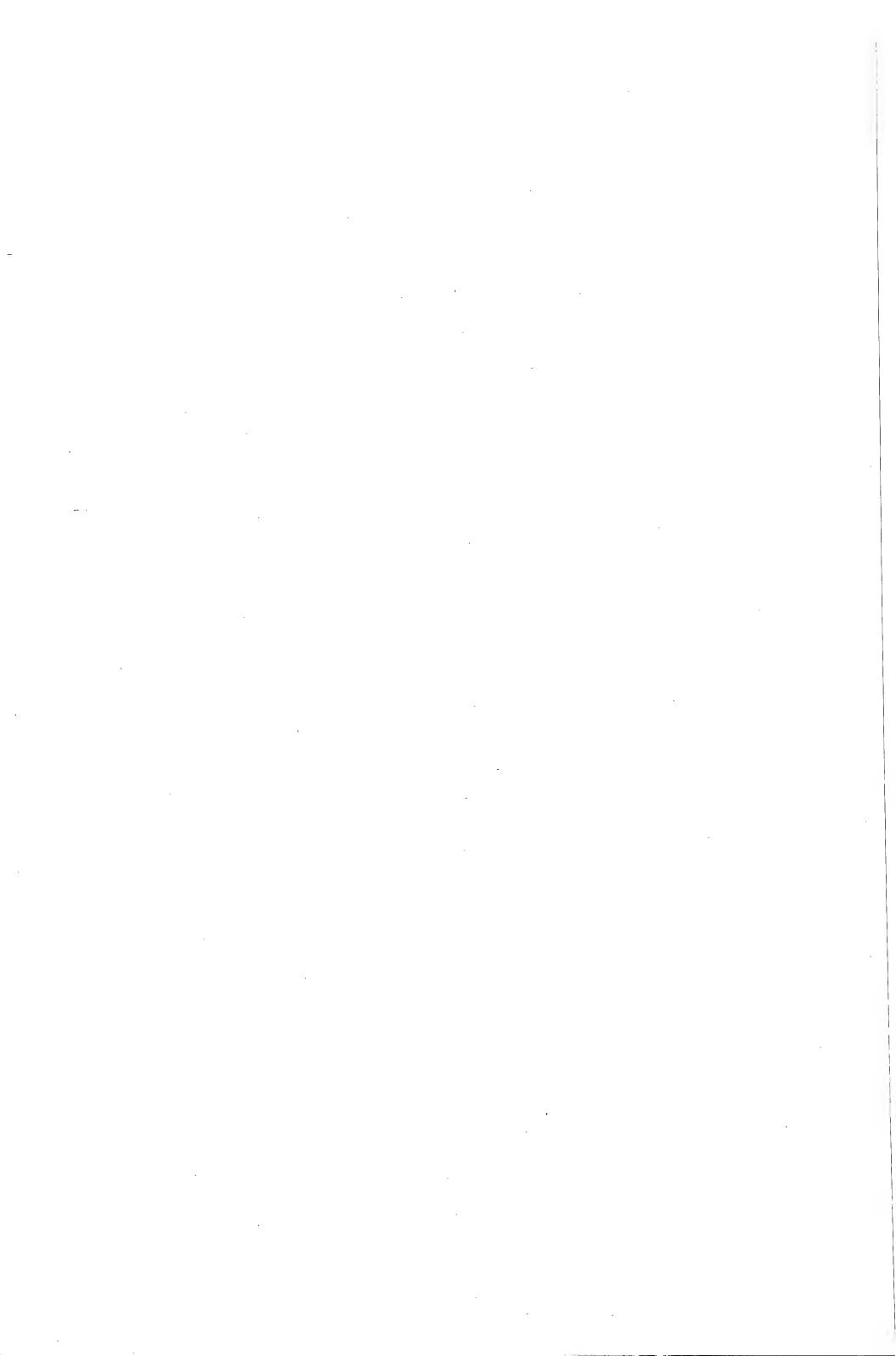
[18]: We love the present day Scholars of the *Sunnah* and hope to benefit from them and regret the passing away of many of them. Imām Mālik said (d.179H) - رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, "The knowledge of *ḥadīth* is your flesh and blood and you will be asked concerning it on the Day of Judgment, so look who you are taking it from."

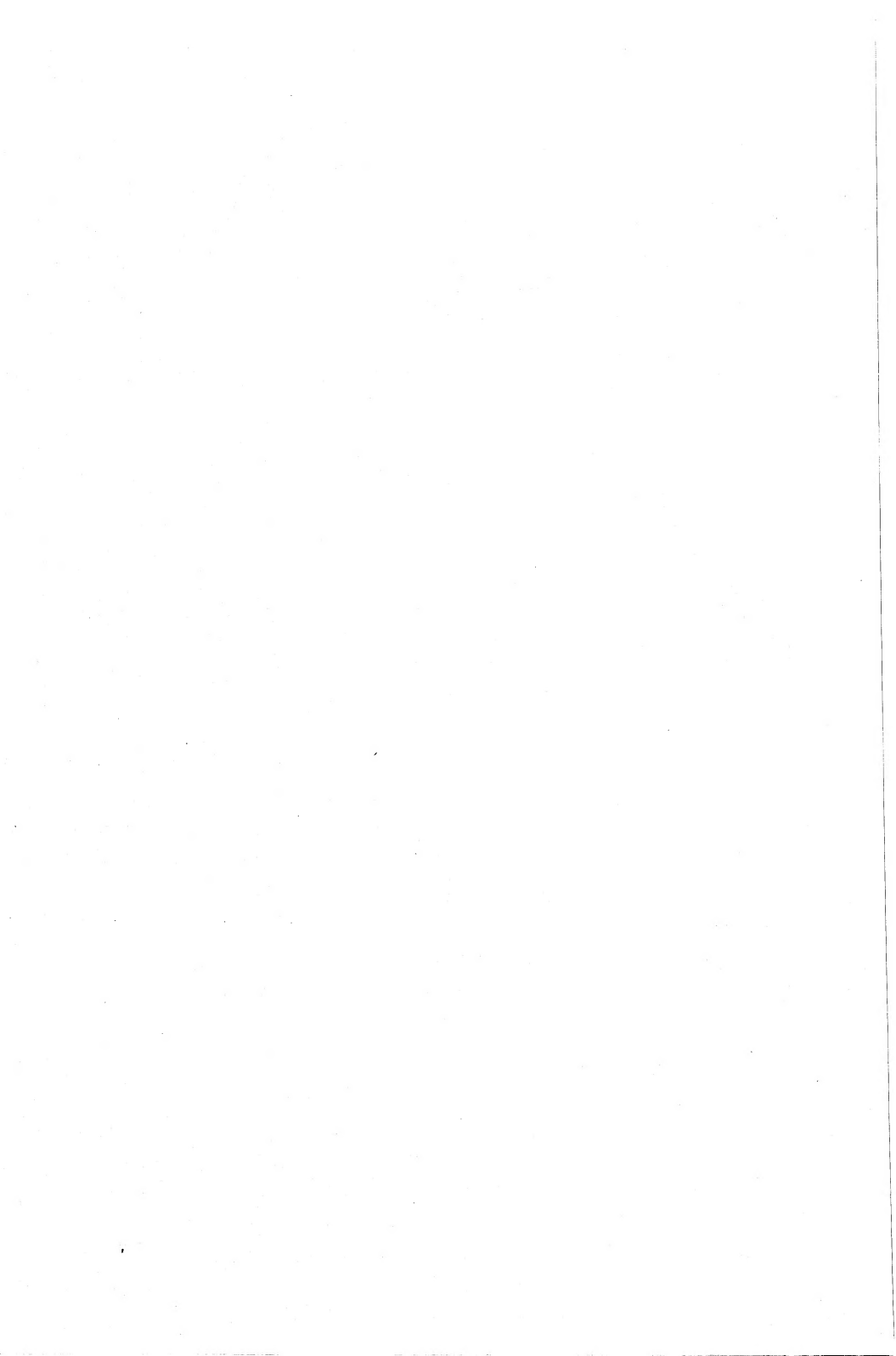
[19]: We do not accept a *fatwā* except from the Book of Allāh and the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ).

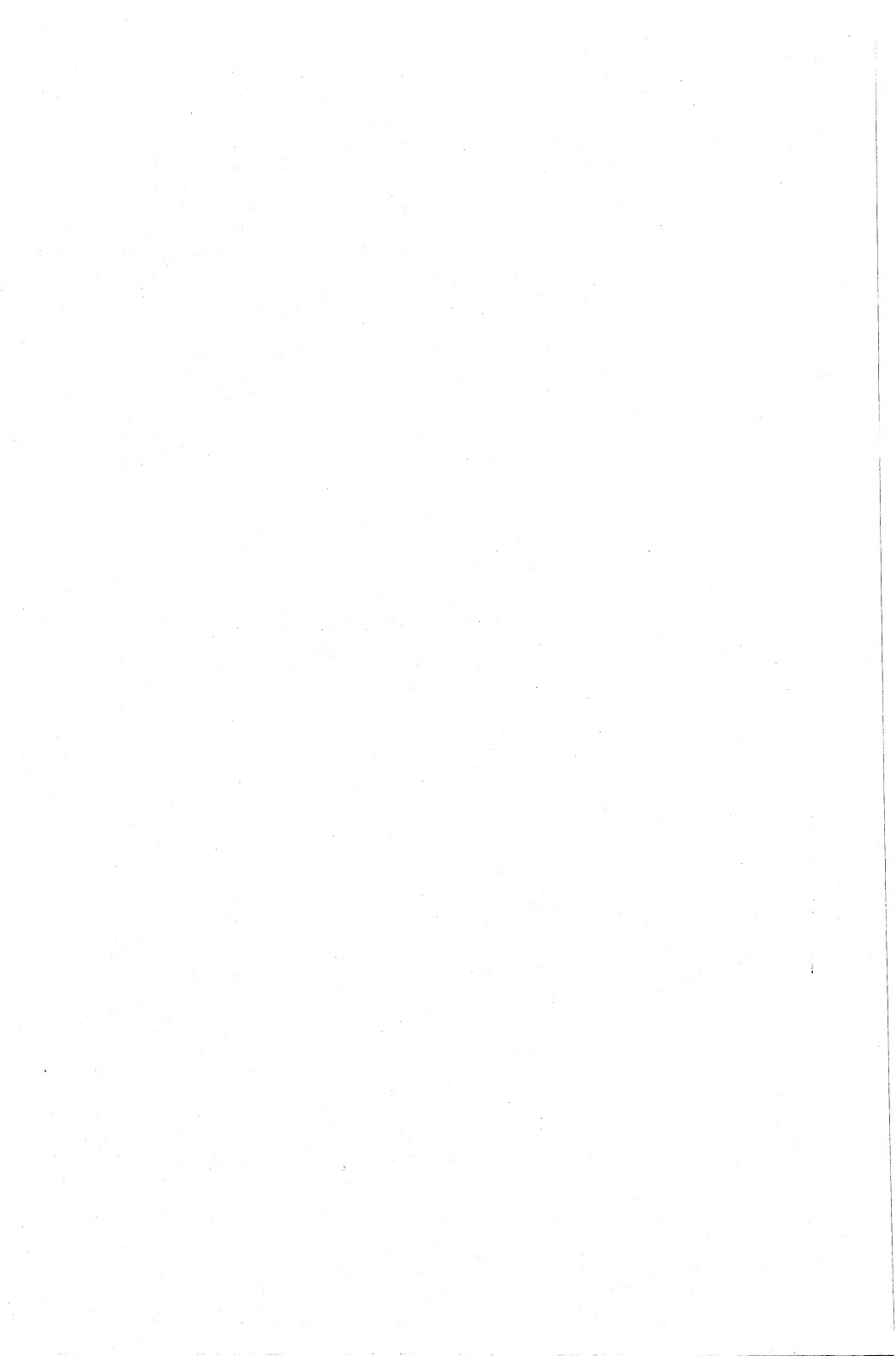
These are glimpses into our *'Aqidah* and our *Da'wah*. So if one has any objection to this, then we are prepared to accept advice if it is truthful, and to refute it if it is erroneous, and to avoid it if it is stubborn rejection. And Allāh knows best.

Notes

[illegible]







Description of the Prophet's Prayer

Shaykh, al-‘Allāmah Muḥammad b. Ṣāliḥ al-‘Uthaymīn

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“The first thing that the servant will be brought to account for on the Day of Resurrection from his actions will be the Prayer. Our Lord will say to His angels, and He knows best, ‘Look at My servant’s Prayer, did he complete it or was it deficient?’ If it is complete, then it will be recorded as complete. However, if there is any deficiency in it He will say, ‘Look and see whether my slave performed any supergatory Prayers.’ If he does have supergatory Prayers, He will say, ‘Complete the obligatory Prayers of My servant from his supergatory Prayers.’ Then the rest of his deeds will be judged in a similar fashion.” Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan Abū Dāwūd (no. 864)

In this book, al-‘Allāmah Muḥammad b. Ṣāliḥ al-‘Uthaymīn explains a number of vital issues related to the Prayer in a very simple and comprehensive fashion. Not only does the Shaykh clarify the description of the Prayer, but he also expounds on finer details such as the meaning of the legislated supplications and remembrance articulated in the Prayer, which is highly beneficial to every Muslim, especially the English reader. This treatise provides the reader with accurate information based on the Qur’ān and the Sunnah, so that the Muslim can actualize the saying of the Prophet (ﷺ): “Pray as you have seen me pray.”

Some of the issues discussed are:

- The meaning of the Prayer linguistically and Islamically
- When and where the Prayer was made obligatory
- Clarification of its importance
- Clarification of its virtues and benefits
- A warning against neglecting it
- Clarification of the ruling regarding the one who abandons it
- Clarification of some of its conditions
- Clarification of its description in light of the Qur’ān and Sunnah
- The invocations after the Prayer
- Clarification of its obligation and pillars
- Clarification of two noble principles
- Clarification of the importance of Khushū‘ (focus & submissiveness) in the Prayer
- Clarification of the ruling of the congregational Prayer and some of its rulings



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